Week ending September 6 1958 *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

JOHN BULL

The adventures of a girl who went everywhere and saw everything . . .

I CYCLED ROUND THE WORLD

by ***LOUISE SUTHERLAND***

BACK TO SCHOOL

A teacher's outspoken views on how your children rule his life

HORNBLOWER'S HURRICANE

by ***C. S. FORESTER***

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FREE SPEECH

How Much Money Do You Need For Happiness?

A friend said to me the other day: "If I earned £10,000 a year I'd be a happy man." At present he gets about £1,000.

So I asked a chap in a pub, who said he was a joiner, how much money would suit him. "A thousand," he said. "That'd buy me everything I want. No worries, a car. . . ." He is now getting about £10 a week.

All this made me wonder. Everybody I've asked thinks that a bit more money will make life wonderful.

For myself, if I'd a car, no mortgage, a house full of gadgets for my wife and knew I couldn't get the sack, I wouldn't have a care in the world. What everyone does seem to be agreed about these days is that you *can* buy happiness with money.

F. WILSON, DRIFFIELD, YORKS.

★ ★ ★

In The Bag

We should be getting familiar by now with the number of uses for polythene bags—packing food, carrying goldfish, ripening strawberries. . . .

But I was surprised recently to see a haystack in one. If the idea proves successful I suppose it will mean the end of Dutch barns and thatched tops. But couldn't the polythene act like a burning glass and fire the stack?

R. VEALL, WINTERSDALE ROAD, LEICESTER.

"Polythene covers are replacing thatching on isolated stacks," says a manufacturer. "There is no lens effect so no danger of fire. In fact, it's safer, as any moisture there is in the stack can't escape. We are using a similar idea on building sites, covering houses so that work can go on in the rain."

★ ★ ★

No Telling

Unless women are authors, actresses or artists, "Miss" screams the fact that they are unmarried. It was much fairer in the old days. Then, every woman past the first bloom of youth was known as "Mistress" whether she was married or single.

HELEN MACGREGOR, NORTHBOROUGH ROAD, NORBURY, LONDON.

★ ★ ★

A Matter Of Life . . .

Can you refuse to have an operation? My husband says no, you can't. If an operation is needed to save or prolong life, the person concerned has no say; the operation will be performed without the consent of anyone, even the next-of-kin.

But I've always understood differently. Who's right?

DOROTHY ALLSOPP, LICHFIELD ROAD, COLESHILL, BIRMINGHAM.

"You can refuse," says a doctor. "And if the surgeon thinks you are in your right mind he'll leave you to your fate, just as he would if next-of-kin refused consent for an unconscious patient. But hospitals try their best to argue you into it."

★ ★ ★

Moon Bombs

The American plan to explode an H-bomb on the moon surprises me. Surely, because of the moon's low gravity and very rare atmosphere, any big explosion on its surface would disperse the thick

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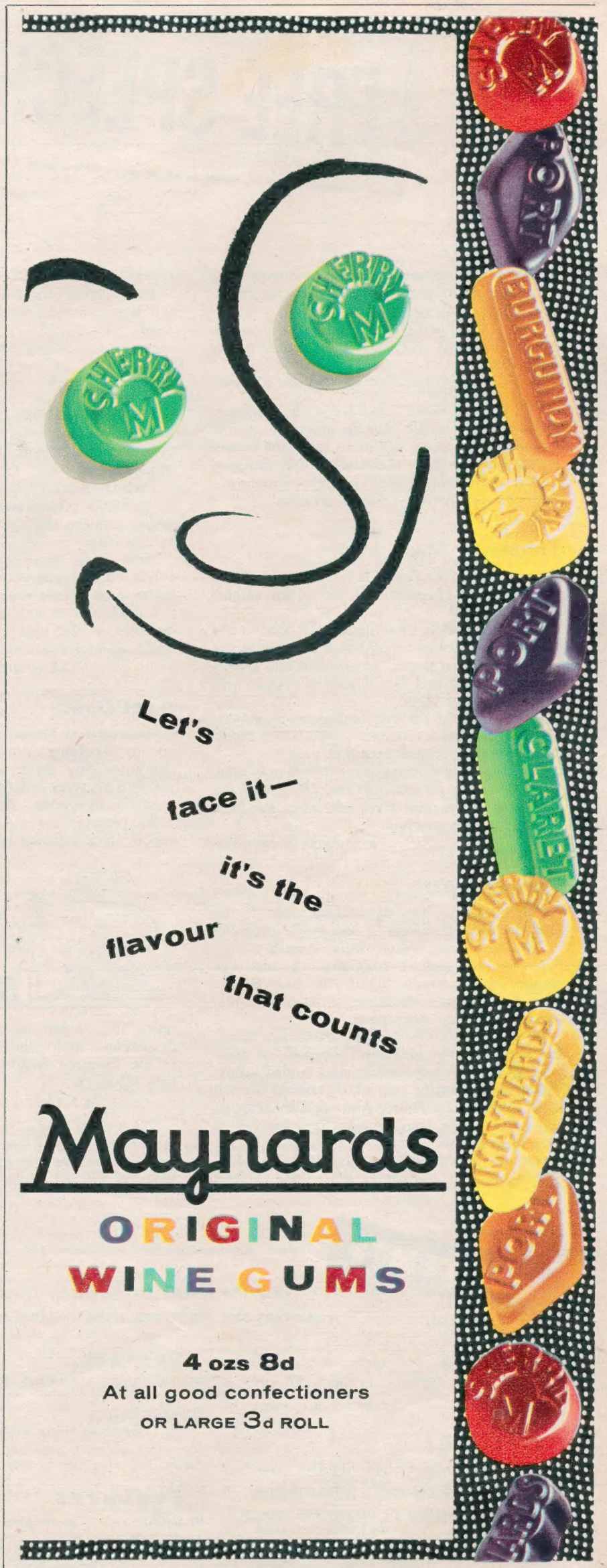

FREE SPEECH

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meteor dust lying there all round the moon—and if the explosion were a nuclear one the radio-active dust so formed would go with it.

This would make any landings of human beings on any part of the moon nearly impossible.

R. A. S. THORSTENSEN, ABBEY PARK, BANGOR, CO. DOWN.

"It's a good point," says Dr. P. E. Hodgson, the nuclear physicist. "But the object of sending a bomb to the moon will be to make the impact visible from earth, so the bomb will be designed to give the maximum flash and the minimum—negligible—radio-active fission product."

Thirteenth Man

"Would you trust your life to a jury?" (JOHN BULL, August 16) reminded me of an embarrassing moment.

I was a reporter, covering my first trial at the Old Bailey. I asked a policeman the way to the press box. "That door," he pointed, and I went through a door and saw a row of people with pads in front of them.

Squeezing in at the end I asked my neighbour what I had missed. Suddenly there was a shout. "Stop the case. Come here that man."

The judge was pointing at me. It was only after a lecture on the penalties for interfering with the course of justice that I realized what I'd done—gone into the jury box.

W. T. COLLER, ONGAR, ESSEX.

Skeleton Coast

As the man who dropped the face cream to the Dunedin Star castaways, I was most interested in "Skeleton Coast" (JOHN BULL, August 16).

I was stationed at Johannesburg and was chosen for the supply flights—the only R.A.F. man to take part—because I understood the parachute release mechanism.

I'll never forget seeing the castaways dance for joy when the parachutes opened—or their grateful waves when the canisters landed safely.

Our plane was the one which rescued the tug crew from Rocky Point. And we also dropped tarpaulins to the bogged-down lorry convoy to help them get out.

But our aim wasn't so good. We had difficulty getting the tarpaulins out of the tail-end cockpit and they fell about a mile off target.

Down below, the men near the lorries pulled our legs. "Rotten bombers," they wrote in the sand.

WILLIAM PIERCE, LONDON ROAD, MAIDSTONE.

Paid Sneaks

So Bromsgrove's public health inspector is visiting schools and offering the children £2 for information leading to the successful prosecution of a litter-bug.

I hope he gets no response.

I'm all for prosecuting litter louts—but *not* for giving children the idea of making easy money by sneaking.

Next thing, some youngster will have the bright idea of approaching an offender for an advance on £2—or else!

I imagine that any sensible teacher must be horrified at the idea. What an occupation in which to interest a child—that of paid informer.

J. SMITH, SECOND AVENUE, WICKFORD, ESSEX.

A Let Down

I was appalled to read the childish notice put up by Spalding council to stop motorists parking—"Any driver disregarding this notice will find his tyres deflated" ("Wanted: A Square Deal For Motorists," August 2).

It's fantastic for a council to threaten such action. If a vehicle's tyres were damaged as a

result of it, would the council be immune from prosecution under the Malicious Damage Act or the Criminal Administration Act? I'm sure they wouldn't.

A. P. JONES, OAK TREE LANE, MANSFIELD, NOTTS

"They'd be liable to both civil action and prosecution," says a lawyer. "A driver could sue for nominal damages for trespass—with special damages for any damage done. And they could be fined up to £20 for tampering with a vehicle."

Says an official of Spalding council: "We know the penalties, but we have never had to carry out the threat; it worked. We won't say we never would carry it out, though. The notice is still there. . . ."

THIS WEEK'S COVER

IT'S zero hour for Operation Seasplash. So both hands to the pump . . . inflate the lifebelts . . . blow up the beach balls—and the last one in is a slowcoach. It isn't the family's intention that this should always be Mother. It's just that she's the only one who knows where things are packed. "But Father makes it up to her later by taking the children for a trip round the bay," says Batchelor. "Then she has nothing whatever to do—but worry about the scrapes they get into."

Who's There?

Three times in two weeks we have been awakened soon after 6 a.m. by a loud tapping on the window. Outside, perched precariously on the ledge, has been a magpie pecking furiously.

The third time there were two of them, and they didn't fly off until I moved the net curtain. It baffles me. We've lived here for nine years, and it's never happened before. And there are no bright objects nearby to attract the birds.

MRS. P. WATTERSON, TROMODE ROAD, DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN.

"Male birds often peck at their reflections in a window," says an ornithologist. "Birds tell each other's sex by their reactions when they meet. In this case, of course, the magpie is bound to think it has met a rival male—so it fights it."

Hell On Earth

Reading through several insurance policies I was struck by references to "acts of God."

It seems that insurance companies believe that the Almighty is capable only of acts of war, flood and similar catastrophies. Who defines this "act of God"? Surely a natural death is as much an act of God as death in an earthquake. So how did the phrase originate?

P. MEYER, BROAD STREET, GRIFFITHSTOWN, PONTYPOOL.

"It's an old term that is going out of use," says an insurance expert. "Nowadays we like to specify the catastrophe.

"Insurance men are God-fearing as much—or as little—as anyone else. The only reason that they attribute to God catastrophic powers is that they eat, sleep and breathe death and destruction. They think of nothing else."

JOHN BULL pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the JOHN BULL Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post.

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Short hours . . . long holidays . . . good prospects. It sounds the ideal job. I took up teaching and discovered the truth—with every exacting lesson

Your children run my life

by TOM LOVATT

WHENEVER anyone chaffs me about the easy time we teachers are supposed to have, my mind goes back to an evening at Sandown, Isle of Wight. With two colleagues I was in charge for a fortnight of the forty-two ten-year-old children who formed our school journey party.

We had been looking after them since seven-thirty that morning. We had seen them washed and dressed. We had taken them into the hotel garden for prayers. We had sat at table with them, persuaded them to write home and issued their daily ration of pocket money.

In the morning, we had played games and written our diaries on the sands. During the afternoon, we had visited the Roman villa at Brading. After tea and a final games session, we had seen them bathed and tucked into bed.

At nine-thirty I was sitting in the lounge. Not that I could relax, even now. In front of me were twenty cameras which I had promised to load with film before morning. In my pocket were two watches. The children knew that I was an amateur watchmaker and had asked me to remove the sand which had seeped into them during the morning's games. But at least I was enjoying a few minutes' peace.

Suddenly, the door burst open and a sleepy-eyed girl ran into the room. "Sir," she said, "Vera's ill. She's walking about and bumping into things."

With another member of the staff, I hurried to their room. Sure enough, Vera was stumbling about with her eyes closed. Even as we watched, she crashed into a wardrobe. She was clearly walking in her sleep.

I tip-toed across the room and lifted her gently in my arms. With my colleagues, I eased her gently into bed. We waited for a few minutes until she woke up naturally and tucked her in again. I then went back to my cameras. It was almost midnight before I got to bed.

Fortunately, there was no recurrence and we put the incident down to the fact that this was Vera's first holiday away from her parents. But if she had hurt herself in any way, we, the teachers, would have been held personally responsible.

Surprisingly, many people still look on teaching as the least exciting of work. They point to our short hours—8.50 a.m. to 4 p.m.—and our long holidays—about twelve weeks a year. They feel it requires little talent or training to stand in front of a class and teach elementary reading, writing and arithmetic—at least to younger children.

But teaching involves far more than this. To take the simplest point first: we spend far more time working than the hours suggest. Marking takes two full nights a week, five for the end-of-year exams. Three times a fortnight I spend my lunch-time supervising school dinner. In a junior school, too, we spend time making equipment, such as work-cards, word-games and wall-displays.

We don't grumble at this. We teachers believe that ours is one of the most interesting and rewarding jobs it's possible to have. I believe that I am fairly typical.

I teach at a junior mixed school at Plumstead, London, S.E. We occupy the top and part of

the middle floor of an old "three-decker" School Board building. An infants' school occupies the rest. My own class, 2B, consists of forty children between the ages of nine and ten, and I am responsible for teaching them the three R's and all the other subjects from drama to geography.

It may sound easy but even the simple act of teaching is a constant challenge to one's ingenuity. Some years ago I was placed in charge of a class of backward children. Now the greatest difficulty in teaching backward children is to arouse their interest. One thing which interests most junior children is an aquarium of tropical fish.

I bought sheets of glass, fitted them into a framework made from angle-irons and built a lampshade from two pieces of wood and a strip of aluminium foil. Then I added a heater and a thermometer. The tank was stocked with guppies, zebras and mollies.

The tank fascinated the children. More, it supplied them with a whole list of words for spelling. As the fish either bred or ate each other, I was able to bring in simple arithmetic. They were a subject for nature study and a topic for compositions.

Incidentally, the project cost me £4 of my own money and many hours of my time. But I did not mind this. I was more than compensated by knowing that I had helped these backward children.

Apart from knowing his subjects and having the ability to teach them, a teacher must be able to keep discipline. Unless you know how, a class of forty high-spirited youngsters can make life miserable.

A young girl student-teacher was trying to give a history lesson and she felt that the children were not paying enough attention. She raised her voice in the hope of capturing their interest but instead the children started muttering. On and on she went, her voice getting louder and shriller, and all the time the children were making more and more noise. The lesson ended in a shouting-match and the student-teacher very nearly in tears.

Afterwards, a tactful word of advice, which any experienced teacher could have provided, put that right. Next time she went into the classroom the children again started to make a noise. But this time she ignored it. She stood in a corner, silently looking at a picture. The children were curious as to what she was looking at and rapidly quietened down. When the silence was complete, she started her lesson—in a low voice. She kept it low and if any children started to talk, she stopped until they were quiet again.

After that, the girl rarely had any more trouble. Teachers may be born teachers but we are still learning after years at the job.

Sometimes a normally well-behaved child becomes fractious, and when this happens I try to find out why. Often I find that a member of the family is sick, or a father in the services has been posted abroad. One girl's work went to pieces because her cat had failed to come home. A little boy who started stealing did so because he felt a new baby had taken his place in his parents' affections.

In such a case, I can often help by having a tactful word with the parents. This is also necessary when they get over-anxious about the eleven-plus. The child knows that they are anxious. He has an intense desire to please them and worries about his possible failure. His sleep and appetite suffer. At school his work falls off. In their over-anxiety, his parents have produced just the effect they were trying to avoid.

Besides being a psychologist, I also have to be a first-aider. One day recently a little girl fell in the playground. She complained that she found it difficult to move her left arm and when she did so, she had a pain. Suspecting a fracture, I splinted it and put it in a sling. Then I drove her to hospital.

While the girl was waiting for the result of the X-ray, I drove her home. Her mother was out and her father, a night worker, was fast asleep. I was unable to make him hear and left a message with a neighbour. When her mother returned shortly afterwards she went straight round to the hospital. Fortunately, the little girl had no fracture, but our action nevertheless was very much appreciated by the parents.

A teacher's spare time, says Lovatt, is fully occupied by out-of-school activities. He has to help at sports days, take drama classes and be a football referee

Pupils help with a new wall display (below). To keep backward children interested, Lovatt built a fish tank. It was a topic for essays, arithmetic and spelling tests

THE possibility of accidents is a constant worry to teachers. On playground duty, you can be standing next to a child who will suddenly fall over for no apparent reason at all and break his leg. What makes accidents even more worrying is the increasing tendency of parents to take teachers to court. If they can prove negligence, they may be awarded swingeing damages.

One infant teacher was taking a P.T. class of six-year-olds and in one exercise asked them to jump from a platform fifteen inches high. The teacher was facing the platform and told each child when to jump. Everything went well until one little girl keeled over and started to cry. She had broken her ankle.

Her parents sued for damages. The teacher was able to prove that she had not been negligent, and won her case. But for months she had the worry of the legal action hanging over her.

Teachers don't restrict their activities to their school hours. I often spend Saturday mornings —and occasionally weekday evenings—as a football referee or cricket umpire. Last year, our nativity play lasted little more than an hour, but for weeks beforehand we had been rehearsing the cast, making costumes and improvising a stage from council platforms, borrowed lighting and curtains taken from the school library.

Nor do we confine ourselves to our own schools. Almost every sport and every cultural activity now has some form of regional organization. For three years I was secretary of the

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When the whales have gone into hiding, when the policeman's legs are not long enough, or when the honey pot is empty . . .

In go the flying bargains!

by PETER JACKSON

As the East African airliner prepared to land at Nairobi, one of the passengers, Keith Shackleton, looked idly through his window and noticed an old biplane flying in the opposite direction. Shackleton, sales director of a London firm of aircraft brokers, realized that the biplane was a 1935 model wanted by a British client.

Shackleton duly approached the owner, bought the plane for £400, and arranged for it to be flown to London at a cost of £260.

Soon after he returned to England, Shackleton was showing the plane to the interested client at Biggleswade Aerodrome. Shackleton took the controls for a demonstration flight and at the suggestion of his companion headed towards East Anglia. Passing over Cambridgeshire, the client pin-pointed a field behind a large farmhouse and asked if the plane could land in it.

"Quite possible," said Shackleton, and was then urged to prove it. After a low approach to drive away a bunch of chickens from the middle of the field, he made a comfortable landing.

"Splendid!" said his passenger. "This is my farm and now I know that the plane fits the field I will have it." He promptly wrote a cheque for £700, insisting on taking immediate possession, and left Shackleton, complete with flying kit, to catch a train back to London.

Shackleton's firm, W. S. Shackleton, Ltd., acts as a clearing house for the world-wide needs of civil aviation. It sells new aeroplanes, when available, to the open market, but the demand for aircraft far exceeds production, and new models are costly. This has brought about the flourishing business in second-hand aircraft which occupies most of Shackleton's attention.

When West African Airways wanted to get rid of six small passenger aircraft three years ago, Shackleton sold one to Captain Marian Kozubski —the Skymaster pilot forced to land earlier this year by Albanian jets—an ambitious pilot who had fought with the Polish, French and British air forces during the war. Kozubski, trying to settle down in Britain, had a struggle to raise £10,000 to buy the plane. From that, he has built up a complete fleet of modern charter aircraft, worth £1 million, and able to serve any part of the world.

In addition to handling aircraft for public use, Shackleton finds used planes to meet clients' individual requirements. A London advertising agency about to introduce aerial neon signs fastened to the underside of low-flying aircraft, asked for a "cheap, slow plane with big wings." A South African wanted an old bomber so that he could drop fence posts around his ranch boundaries for erection by native labourers.

Ordering a light aircraft which could be mounted with a sporting gun, a New Zealand farmer intended to make high-level attacks on the eagles which threatened his sheep. Two reconnaissance planes were ordered for a West Australian aerodrome. One was for a whale spotter. The other was required by a professional beekeeper who trebled the usual yield of honey by searching at tree-top height for areas where the much prized blue gum flower was in blossom, and then transporting his hives there.

Shackleton (right) and Wing Commander Cyril Arthur, general instructor of Fair Oaks Flying Club, with a Tiger Moth, which is now as cheap to buy as a sports car

When a Paraguayan operator recently inquired about seaplanes, Shackleton was immediately able to offer him a pair which had just finished a spell as flying ambulances along the Norwegian fiords.

Spare parts are often much more elusive.

A police constable wrote from Central Australia that law and order would disappear from his vast area unless he obtained a replacement exhaust pipe for the 1925 biplane in which he patrolled the district.

Shackleton turned detective to track down former owners of the 1925 plane and eventually he uncovered a rusty but serviceable exhaust pipe in a barn at Great Missenden.

"Finding vintage spares is more a matter of prestige than business," he says. "We charged the constable seven and sixpence for the exhaust, which was sent out in a plane being delivered to that part of the world, but it caused more trouble than our sale of sixty trainers to Australia's government-subsidized flying clubs."

Prices of second-hand aeroplanes have hardened in recent years. Dakotas which were being sold after the war at £15,000 now fetch £25,000. Shackleton handles anything up to a £55,000 car-ferry or a £400,000 Viscount airliner. A Tiger Moth can be bought for between £450 and £700, and a 100-m.p.h. monoplane with a three-seater cabin, which can land on a football pitch and has a petrol consumption of twenty miles to the gallon, still costs no more than a sports car. Operational costs average £4 for every hour in the air.

There is certainly not the mechanical mystery

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Here was a strange

IT all began on a dark night in the middle of March when Mrs. McRae, the wife of an operating theatre porter at the Royal Highland Infirmary, Inverlachty, felt the first movements of her unborn child. She woke her husband, Leonard, at half past three in the morning to tell him about it. He was not excited. . . .

At the same hour of the same morning, in the London offices of Mackie and Levi-Smith, dealers in precious stones, a locked window slid open without setting off the burglar alarm. Lennie the Spider, so called because of his climbing abilities, slid noiselessly through. He closed the window after him and a few minutes later opened the door to his partner in crime, Sesame Brooks. Sesame's name referred to his skill in opening doors to hidden treasures.

There was nothing crude about Sesame's technique. Not for him the Aladdin's lamp of an oxy-acetylene torch, nor the noisy geni of an explosive jelly. Given time and the use of a doctor's stethoscope he had never been known to fail.

Within half an hour the contents of a burglar-proof safe had been transferred to the capacious pockets of Lennie and Sesame. And as Mrs. Leonard McRae, four hundred miles to the north, overcame her excitement and relapsed into a quiet sleep, Lennie the Spider and Sesame Brooks faded silently away.

For the next three months they moved about the South of England, but the police were never far behind; and when most of their haul had been exchanged for ready cash they decided it would be wise to disappear more completely.

So it was that on June 25 two pale and scruffy Englishmen became tenants of an isolated croft fifteen miles from Inverlachty. With them they brought the three remaining pieces of loot—three stones too valuable to be "fenced" in London—to await a suitable opportunity for transfer to Amsterdam.

To the few people they met their declared intention was to fish, and in fact with the cottage went the part fishing rights of two trout lochs. Yet although they brought with them rods and reels, lines and lures, for the first fortnight they were hardly to be seen outside the cottage.

It was in the early evening of the fourteenth day that Sesame flung down the book which he had been reading for the third time.

"Hell, Lennie," he said, "I'm browned-off proper. We've finished most of the whisky, I'm sick of tinned food and my ulcers is giving me hell. I'm going out."

With a protesting Lennie at his heels, he stumbled up the rough track behind the house and came through a small patch of trees to the edge of the smaller of the two lochs which they

The drink proved too much for Sesame's ulcer. He had sunk to the floor with a low moan—and that was how General Pennywrack and the ghillie found him

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

THE PERFORATED ROBBER

by CHARLES STEWART

had rented but had never seen. Here they halted, and were silent. With the sun sinking in scarlet glory over Ben Lachty, the stretch of water nestling at the foot of the hills seemed almost enchanted.

Then fate enacted the next step in their downfall. A fly settled gently on the water not twenty yards from where they stood. That was all. But it was enough.

The dark-backed, red-speckled trout lying close to the bottom rose in a surge of power, and with a glittering cascade of spray it took the fly, sailed briefly through the air and splashed loudly as its two pounds of weight hit the water once more.

The sight stirred some primitive urge in the two Londoners. With beginners' luck, three trout were frying for lunch the next day, and after that there was no holding them. Both had learned to use their fingers as sensitive organs in their criminal trade and it served them in good stead when it came to flicking a cast of flies tantalizingly across the water, or playing a two-and-a-half-pound fighting, tossing mass of brown and silver on the lightest of light lines.

By early August they were no longer recognizable as the two pallid creatures who had first arrived. Bronzed, clear of eye, capable of walking fifteen miles without fatigue, they were changed men. But they were still among the local distillery's best customers, and the whisky did nothing to abate the grumblings of Sesame's gastric ulcer.

Yet they had not lost sight of their main purpose. It was decided that the time was ripe for Lennie to attempt to reach Amsterdam. An air passage was booked for him for August 15.

The evening before Lennie's departure, Sesame went fishing alone. He chose the second and larger of their two rented lochs, and to reach it he had to pass close to the stretch of a nearby salmon river belonging to General Pennywrack. This was private water, and Sesame and Lennie had left it well alone. On this evening, however, Sesame saw a salmon leap and his memories of battles with three-pounders faded into insignificance.

With a quick look around to make sure that nobody else was in sight, he crept quietly to the head of the pool. It was about forty minutes later that he "tailed" the salmon and his aching arms relaxed. . . .

But isolated though the Highlands may be, little goes on that is unobserved. At nine o'clock that evening the head ghillie reported to the general. "I think, sir," he concluded, "that it was one of the two visitors from the cottage. I was too far to reach him, but a visit in the morning might be a suggestion."

"Hmmph," said the general. "Tell Angus that I'll want the car at nine fifteen. I'll go round and see them myself. About time I met them, anyway. You thought he was using light tackle, eh? Strange. . . ."

The next day was August 15. At nine o'clock Lennie packed his bag. And twelve miles away, Mrs. McRae—now sure that her time had come—also packed a bag and waited for the taxi which was to take her to hospital.

At ten minutes past nine Lennie, early though it was, poured two drams of whisky from the bottle and handed one to Sesame. He said: "Drink up, Sesame. Good for your ulcers."

At nine fifteen he left the cottage to walk a mile down the road to catch the only bus of the day into the town.

At nine fifteen the general entered his car with the head ghillie and drove off in the direction of the cottage.

At nine fifteen Mrs. McRae and her husband left home for the hospital.

And at nine fifteen the alcohol-induced spasm around the ulcer in Sesame's stomach at last proved too much for the damaged tissues. A small hole appeared in the ulcer centre and the acid stomach contents leaked into the hypersensitive peritoneal cavity. Sesame, with both hands clasped to his now rigid paunch, sank to the floor with a low moan.

When General Pennywrack arrived and knocked on the door he received no reply. But the door was unlatched and he walked in. . . .

The police car arrived shortly after the ambulance. Once the semi-comatose Sesame was on his way, the two policemen went back to the cottage to try to check the identity of the patient. They found the remains of the general's salmon and they found other things which interested them very much more.

When the police left the cottage, Sesame was being carried through the hospital doors and Lennie was aboard the Inverness train.

The intricate hospital machinery got swiftly under way. Within seven minutes the contents of a syringe carried a carefully measured quantity of morphia into Sesame's tissues and shortly his pain was eased and he slept. In the maternity ward Mrs. McRae, whose labour pains were now beginning seriously to distress her, received an injection of a different kind. Only Lennie of the three was awake, and was gathering together his coat and bag ready for his arrival at Inverness.

By the time Sesame was ready to be taken to the operating theatre, it was approaching one o'clock. Mrs. McRae, whose labour was progressing rapidly now, was moved into the delivery room, while her husband pushed the trolley holding Sesame from Surgical Seven to the operating theatre block . . . and a single-decker bus carried Lennie from Inverness to the nearby airport at Dalcross.

A policeman waited for Sesame in the hospital recovery room. This was where Sesame would be watched for the first few hours after his operation before returning to the main ward.

At the moment, MacNaughton, the house surgeon, was painting Sesame's abdomen a bright yellow colour. Green towels were draped around the operating area and MacNaughton took the knife from the sister. He glanced at the anaesthetist and asked, irreverently, "Ripe for the slaughter?"

"Ripe!" answered his colleague with a brief smile.

Swiftly, deftly, the sharp scalpel laid open the soft flesh and MacNaughton knew only the stages of the operation for the next twenty minutes.

He did not notice the starry-eyed nurse, who whispered a message to the sister, nor did he see sister's expression as she replied: "Tell him at once and—oh! tell him to go and see her now. We'll get this case back without him, and we'll be stopping for lunch afterwards anyway."

So Leonard McRae received the news that his son was safely born, and went swiftly to his wife's side.

A little later, his perforated ulcer securely stitched, Sesame was transferred to the recovery room. The waiting policeman was invited to: "Give a hand with this stretcher—we're a porter short."

The ward nurse, not knowing of McRae's newborn child, said: "Where's Lennie?"

She referred, of course, to Leonard McRae, but deep in the brain of Sesame the words struck a chord. He was only half round from the anaesthetic. "Going to Amsterdam," he grunted.

The policeman asked the way to the nearest telephone. THE END

© *Charles Stewart, 1958*

I let the wind blow me

THE day couldn't have been worse for setting out for Cornwall. All the way from London I'd been battling into a gale, the wind bringing tears streaming from my eyes, tearing my breath away, buffeting my bicycle. And my progress wasn't made any easier by the little black trailer I was towing. In it were the few things I needed for my holiday tour of the West Country.

Suddenly, an extra strong gust of wind brought me to a complete standstill and I dismounted. Wheeling my bicycle to the side of the road I considered what was the best thing to do.

I still hadn't even reached Swindon. To ride on was almost impossible. I could either wait for the wind to die down, push my bicycle through it—or go somewhere else.

It was June, 1951—and my twenty-third birthday. Eighteen months earlier I had come to Britain as a nurse from my home in Dunedin, New Zealand, and fallen in love with it.

But there was no vital necessity for me to go to Cornwall. I had £80. There were many other lovely places I could visit. And my holiday was ticking by.

In the end I took the line of least resistance, turned the bicycle round and let the wind blow me.

Ten weeks later I was in Greece. I had crossed the Channel and cycled through France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Yugoslavia. It was a strange, zigzag route that took me first north, then east, then south, then east again. That was the way the wind blew.

By the time I had reached the white and olive-hued city of Salonica, I knew that I meant to continue cycling round the world. But at the Turkish consulate in Salonica I came up against my first obstacle.

"What time shall I pick up my visa?" I asked, smiling at the official as I handed in my application form.

My smile faded as he consulted not his watch but a calendar.

"The papers must first go to Ankara for Foreign Office permission," he said. "Call here again early in November."

It was then the beginning of September.

I left the consulate thoughtfully. I had been told that westerners never travelled third-class on Levantine trains. Perhaps, I thought, if I did so I would be able to get across the frontier without a visa.

Next day I took my place in a third-class compartment jammed to the corridors with humanity and luggage. However, this suited my plan admirably. In the confusion at the frontier station I would simply claim my bike from the guard's van and slip away.

When my fellow travellers learned of my plan they immediately offered to help. One, a huge Turk with an immense handlebar moustache, shook me awake soon after midnight.

"We have just left Greece," he whispered. "The frontier post of Edirne is only a few minutes away. I will help you to get the machine when the train stops."

My heart was racing in the hot, noisy confusion at Edirne. But with the giant Turk loping beside me in the dark I made for the guard's van. There were no questions. The Turk lifted down the bicycle and trailer, squeezed my hand, wished me luck and returned to his compartment.

It seemed to me that my best bet was to put twenty or thirty miles between me and the frontier before daylight. So when all was quiet I crept out from the bushes where I'd been hiding, hopped on my bike and pedalled away.

Like other bets of mine, this one quickly came to grief. Girls riding bicycles with trailers at dead of night tend to be a novelty in Edirne. I had gone no more than five blocks in the deathly silent town when I was challenged out of the darkness.

It was a policeman with a rifle. His eyes roved curiously over me and my equipment.

"*Passeport,*" he said.

With a sinking feeling that I would soon be inside a Turkish jail, I handed it over. But he merely shook his head sadly, handed the passport back after thumbing expertly through it, and then with grave courtesy escorted me back to the Greek border.

In Greece I studied my maps again. There must be other ways of getting to Turkey. Perhaps if I tried to cycle across the frontier by one of the smaller roads. . . .

But when I tried I lost my way and ended up not at the Turkish frontier but the Bulgarian. So I went to Israel instead.

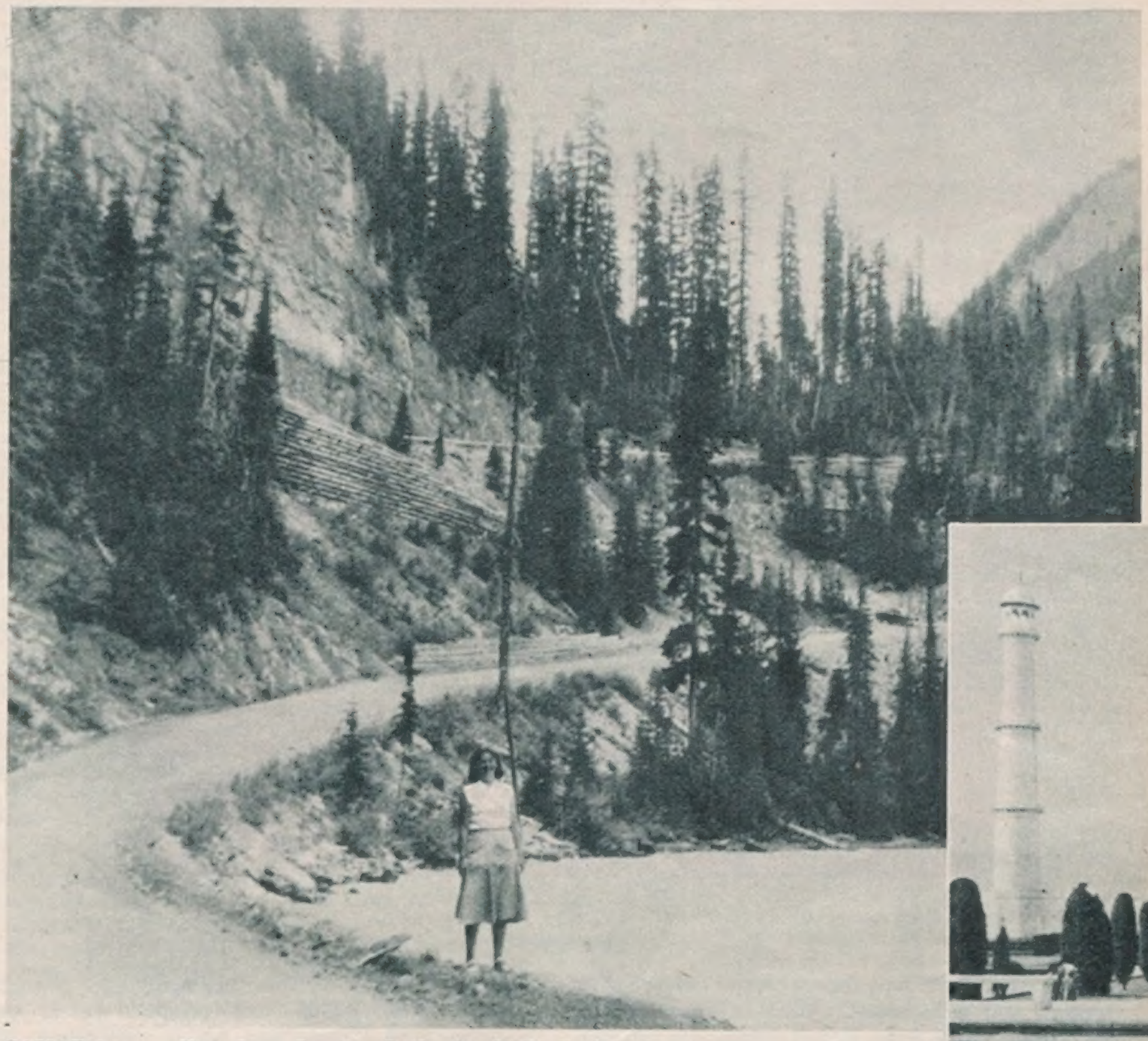
I went by boat from Athens to Haifa. When I got there my original £80 had dwindled to £5, and by the time I had cycled to Nazareth I had nothing at all. So I took my nursing certificate out of the trailer and knocked at the door of the Nazareth mission hospital.

"I come from New Zealand. I am a state registered nurse. I want a job."

I stayed three months and was put in charge of the women's ward. None of the patients could speak English, but with the aid of the young nurses I managed well enough.

Vendettas kept our beds filled. One man, shot in the face by a member of a rival family, made no secret of his plans when he recovered. His first errand on leaving hospital, he said, would be to find the man who had shot him—and shoot *him*.

The worst case of vendetta concerned a sixteen-year-old girl who had been badly burned. Three days after her admittance an old truck pulled up outside the hospital and seven or



CANADA . . . For days Louise Sutherland climbed the lonely road across the Rockies. Then she sped down the other side and on to New York—flat broke

INDIA . . . The Taj Mahal. Before visiting it Louise had been attacked by two men. She made the trip at night to prove to herself that she dare go on alone

round the world

by LOUISE SUTHERLAND

My fifty-bob bike

took me to jungle dangers

and a forbidden shrine.

And to four men who

wanted to marry me

HOME AGAIN . . . after 30,000 miles without a puncture. Louise's old bicycle took her across Europe, Asia and on to Canada. There it broke down and she was given a new one

eight people tumbled out. They strode into the ward and cornered a young Arab nurse.

"What do they want?" I asked her.

"They say the girl who is burned is their kinswoman. They have come to take her home."

Although I was reluctant to release her, we could not forcibly keep a patient against the family's wishes. When all argument and persuasion had failed, we discharged the girl. She left in the truck that day.

A few days later there was a commotion in the ward. An old Arab woman lay weeping on the floor. She was the mother of the burned girl—and the people who had taken her away were not her kinsfolk but a rival family from the same valley.

I spent a year in Arab countries, with stints as a nurse in Jordon and in Beirut in the Lebanon. In Beirut my happy-go-lucky attitude ran me into serious trouble. Arriving almost penniless, I checked in at the Y.W.C.A. and went out to look for work. There was none to be had

For two awful days I had nothing to eat at all and I was on the point of giving in and wiring home for money when I heard that a New Zealand representative of the United Nations Organization was in town. I rang him up, "just to say hallo," as I hungrily told him.

He was delighted to hear a New Zealand voice. "I wonder if you'd care to have dinner with me?" he asked.

Would I care! Dinner that night was a meal to remember. I expect my host will remember it, too. He sat watching with fascination as I ripped through five courses.

Next day, I got a job as a private nurse.

Despite such interludes of enforced dieting, cycling and fresh air increased my weight. I weighed seven and a half stones when I left England. By the time I reached the Middle East I had put on 15 lb. and I kept to that weight for most of the trip.

WHEN I had saved the equivalent of £80 in Beirut I changed the money into £2 travellers' cheques and was on my way again.

I had planned to cycle across the desert to Baghdad, but officials told me that the Syrian Government would not take the responsibility of allowing a solitary woman to do so. Instead I was packed off by train.

It was in Baghdad that I had my first experience of wearing a yashmak. Two Arab girl students at the hostel where I stayed took me with them to the famous golden mosque at Kadhimain—a shrine forbidden to unbelievers.

To disguise me, one of the students, named Amina, lent me a robe and yashmak. The robe was easily arranged, but I couldn't get used to the hard leather veil.

To get the best out of a yashmak, a girl needs a serenely swooping nose. Mine was small, turned-up —and soon very sore.

I followed the girls into the mosque to the women's wing where we kneeled facing west (only men had the privilege of praying towards the east).

Children ran about playing games between the worshippers—and after a few minutes I envied them. My knees ached, perspiration poured down my face, which was practically smothered by the robe to hide my fair hair and blue eyes, and my nose was chafed by the yashmak. I was glad to get outside.

The hot desert road from Baghdad to Basra took me through ancient Babylon and Ur of the Chaldees, the cradles of civilization, now forlorn mud ruins beside the River Euphrates.

I divided my cycling day in two, with a siesta between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. to avoid the extreme midday heat. At sunset I would either find shelter in a village or unroll my sleeping bag in the desert.

During the first few nights in the open I found it impossible to sleep, afraid that every rustle was a snake, a scorpion or a deadly spider. But I soon got used to the immense emptiness of the wilderness and came to look forward to the cool evenings under the stars.

Best of all I liked to sleep beside the river. Before bedding down for the night I would slip out of my dusty, travel-stained clothes and run down to the water to bathe.

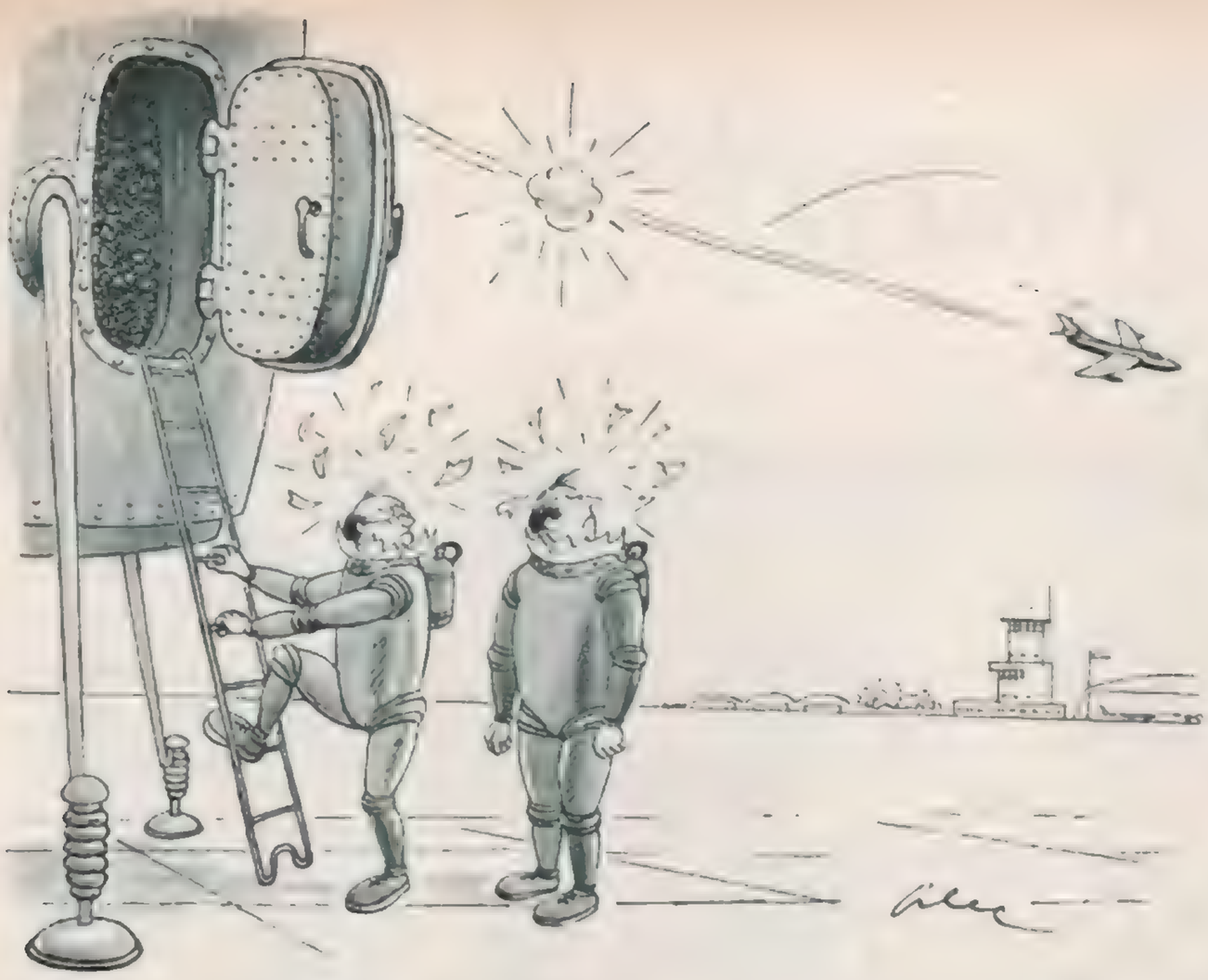
Friends had warned me of marauding bedouins and wild camels. No bedouins marauded near me, and the only camels I met seemed under perfect control.

Througout the trip I aimed to cycle about fifty miles a day—not a very difficult schedule to keep to, but I had to pull a loaded trailer weighing 140 lb.

The heaviest items in the trailer, which was about eighteen inches square and ran on two old pram wheels, were my tent and sleeping bag.

I carried little extra clothing and always cycled in the same tough skirt. I had already

Continued on page 30



Horses

Horses have long-nosed oblong faces
And queer-named joints in lower places.

Some people hold them up with reins,
Others just hold themselves by manes.

Their trot entails a painful bumping,
But is less lethal than their jumping.

Chances to stay with them grow scanter
When they have hurried to a canter.

They wave front feet at men who lead them
And try to swallow hands that feed them.

They bite and kick, so it is idle
To say both ends aren't homicidal.

Horses are very strong and able.
Their proper place is in a stable.

B. R. GIBBS

IN SHORT

Just Published

You're starting off on the wrong foot if you try to "make-do" with inadequate equipment.... The Man of the House may need some gentle persuasion and instruction here. It's up to you to put over the point—that he has all the proper equipment for his job; and so, too, should you. That he isn't doing you a special favour by providing you with the household kit.

So if, shocked into action by what you say or do after reading this guide, he presents you with a new cleaner or wash-boiler for your birthday, then let his Christmas present from you be that Paris hat or beauty kit you've always wanted.

Should your resolve weaken, then remember this sad epitaph which was put on an American housewife's tombstone around 1825:

"Here lies a woman who was always tired
She lived in a house where no help was hired:
Her last words on earth were, 'Dear friends, I am going
Where washing ain't done, nor sweeping, nor sewing,
But everything there is exact to my wishes,
For where they don't eat, there's no washing dishes'."

From *Halving Your Housework* by Phyllis Lovell published this week by Mills and Boon

Words Of Wisdom

When I was a boy in Montgomeryshire a fine old Welsh-speaking workman, Joe Williams—the best mower in the district—taught me how to use a scythe. Much depended on the sharpness of the blade and Joe showed me how to hone it properly.

As he put the stone in my hand he told me an English phrase he had learned when working on a Shropshire farm. He hoped I would learn it:

"If you don't sweat when you hone, you will sweat when you mow."

That is true whatever the task confronting one.

CLEMENT DAVIES, P.C., M.P.

Hair Apparent

A woman is classed, with meticulous care,
By nothing so much as the shade of her hair.
There's the platinum blonde, and the strawberry too,
The redhead, with titian or copperish hue,
The light brown, the dark brown, and also the medium,
As well as the black—to list more would cause tedium.
A man though, *re* hair, is just jetsam and flotsam,
He comes in two classes: he has or has not some.

RICHARD ARMOUR

Foreign Affairs

William Clark, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, had to drive at high speed to the local hospital when his wife was going to have a baby. Half-way there he realized he'd forgotten to bring her.

Alfred Madeling was brought to a Dusseldorf court on a police warrant after he had failed to answer a traffic offence summons. He told the judge that he had not ignored the summons. It had ordered him to appear in court on July 14, 1985.

Senator Albert Gore, addressing a gathering before the Byrdstown, Tennessee, court house during his election campaign, was interrupted by a prisoner awaiting trial in a cell overlooking the meeting. "Hurrah for Gore!" he shouted. The unruffled Senator calmly remarked, "I welcome all support. I just hope he gets out in time to vote."

Sally

When I saw Sally this morning she said modern life was all problems and what did I do with my detergent coupons?

It was all right, she said, before I could answer, when the first ones came, plastered with exciting messages like "This Means Money," and being addressed as Mistress of the House made her feel like a female laird with a bunch of keys dangling at her waist.

But they kept thumping through the letter box, some with free clothes-pegs attached, at such a rate she couldn't keep pace. And all those smug toothy women pointing at snowy washing lines gave her a guilt complex.

She had thought of covering a screen with them, like one in a museum done with postage stamps, most impressive, but terribly time-consuming. She'd tried giving them to the children to play millionaires with, but the mercenary little beasts simply sold them off at school, and the other mothers were complaining.

When she paused for breath I told her I used mine rather dully to buy detergents. Sally said how marvellous, it hadn't even struck her, and what a lot of washing I must do. I could see I'd given her something to think about.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

Starke's Holiday Guide Book

"When hiring a boat don't rely on the attendant to keep the time. Check to see that you get a full hour's rowing"

BLAZING NIGHTMARE IN THE LIONS' DEN

by JAMES COREY

A few yards from the lion house the glowing ballroom starts to crumble. It was this disaster that threatened William Wilson and James Morris

"We cage them, we can't let them roast...." As the fire devoured Belle Vue two men risked their lives—to make death easier for the animals

On the early hours of January 17, 1958, Belle Vue caught fire. Flames eighty feet tall swept through the heart of the world-famous amusement park on the outskirts of Manchester. Belle Vue's £250,000 ballroom block, a two-and-a-quarter-acre Victorian sprawl of timber and glass, was ablaze from end to end. Twenty fire engines were in action from all sides to prevent the fire spreading.

Only a few paces to the north of the ballroom block were the funfair, waxworks, and administrative buildings. The main zoological gardens, with their elephants, bears and apes, and the King's Hall circus arena were on the west side. A short distance to the south were the miniature railway and the glass-roofed reptile house, containing deadly cobras, a twenty-two-foot python, and poisonous lizards.

As long as a strong breeze fanning the fire continued from the west only the lion house was in immediate danger. It stood seven yards away from the eastern wing of the ballroom, directly in the path of the advancing flames. Inside the lion house were a lioness, a leopard, two leopardesses, a tiger, a tigon (a cross between a tiger and a lion), and two men with loaded rifles.

William Wilson, a small intense Scotsman who had been appointed zoo superintendent at Belle Vue only a fortnight before, was wearing the trousers from his best suit and an old jacket over pyjamas. James Morris, a pink-cheeked, bespectacled ex-police inspector who was chief security officer at Belle Vue, was fully clothed. He had completed a routine inspection of the grounds a few minutes before the ballroom burst into flames at 1.46 a.m.

Wilson and Morris were standing in a foot of water. Hosepipe jets drummed over the front of the lion house and on the roof. Water poured inside where windows and skylights collapsed. The shattered frames were outlined against the solid glare of the blazing ballroom. It was as if the windows had been covered with red paper. The heat had forced the animals to the back of their cages where they twisted and turned in their sleeping boxes. Wilson tightened his grip on the .303 army rifle.

"If the fire touches this place we will have to shoot the lot," he said.

Wilson knew that any attempt to move the animals could lead to a mass escape of fully grown beasts which would attack the firemen and terrorize the whole neighbourhood. But if the animals were left in their cages, they would be burned to death. . . .

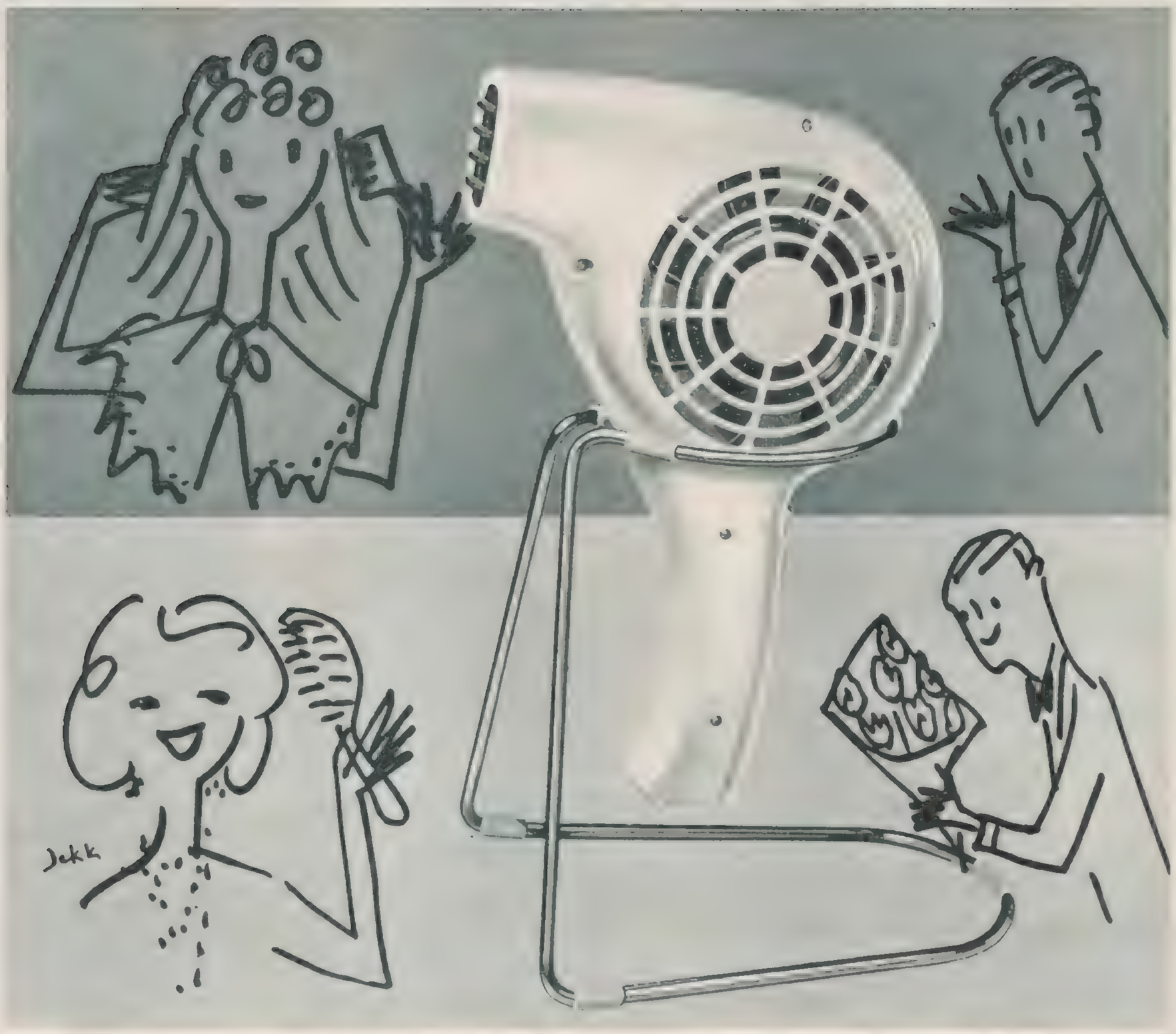
"We cage them up and we can't let them be roasted alive," Wilson muttered for what Morris estimated was the twentieth time. The two men had been in the lion house for half-an-hour, with no idea of what was going on outside, when someone splashed towards them through the steaming interior.

It was Commander Kenneth Hoare, chief of Manchester Fire Brigade. Water rolled off his helmet and soaked a long blue scarf trailing from his neck. Morris thought the fire officer seemed to relish the wet as much as a young boy sheltering from rain beneath a fountain.

"I just don't know whether we can save this building," he said. "The woodwork is already red hot. But for the tin sheathing at the front and on the roof, it would have gone up ten minutes ago. If it does catch fire this place will burn like a match. How long will it take to shoot these animals when I give the word?"

"Four or five minutes," said Wilson.

"You'll have to do better than that," said Hoare. "I may not be able to give you more than four seconds' warning to get clear." He



A girl's best friend...

You'll have a lovelier, better-groomed head the day you get this wonderful G.E.C. hairdryer. Washing your hair is no problem when drying it is so easy. Re-setting your hair for the evening becomes a matter of a few pins and a few minutes.

Styling your Toni Continental home-perm is far quicker with your G.E.C. hairdryer! It will even dry your nylons. It is light and easy to handle because it's so perfectly balanced.

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Obtainable from your usual electrical supplier.

Get a G.E.C. *hairdryer*

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turned and waded out into the yard to supervise the appliances at work throughout the grounds.

The speed with which the fire had spread through the ballroom block surprised even experienced fire officers.

The building was apparently intact when William Brockbank, a nightwatchman, began his rounds at a quarter-to-two. A minute later, after passing the suits of armour ranged along the mock-medieval Baronial Hall, he found the ceiling of the York Bar in flames. At 1.48 a.m. a telephone rang in the control room at the Fairfield Street headquarters of Manchester Fire Brigade. "Fire at Belle Vue!"

The control-room staff was prepared for trouble at Belle Vue. At a practice attendance the previous week, it had been discovered that the fireworks arena lake alongside the ballroom block had been drained and the hydrant system in the grounds was under repair. Pump appliances from four fire stations in the Manchester area were ordered to the amusement park. As they drove through the night, Wilson was being called from bed in his flat over the Palm Court Restaurant, next to the lion house.

From the strong light filtering through the bedroom curtains, Wilson assumed it was morning when he woke to a hammering on his back door. Then he pulled aside the curtains and saw flames reaching sixty feet through the ballroom roof. The fire was concentrated beyond the halfway mark of the 580 foot-long building, but was being driven towards him by the stiff breeze which blew the curtains into his face.

The glare at the window woke up Mrs. Betty Wilson. "Another couple of minutes," said Wilson, "and this whole place will be up in smoke." He began to dress over his pyjamas and stuck his bare feet into the nearest shoes. He went into the next bedroom and found that Fiona, his eleven-year-old daughter, had already got up and changed into a kilt and woollen cardigan. She was methodically lacing her brogues.

Wilson returned to the other bedroom. His wife, not half-dressed, was struggling into a suspender belt. "Have you gone mad?" Wilson yelled. "Why bother with a thing like that when there's a fire swooping on us?"

"How else can I keep my stockings up?" said Mrs. Wilson with baffling logic.

When the family eventually ran from the flat, Mrs. Wilson was clutching her favourite string of pearls, and Fiona was carrying her father's vest, her mother's pyjama trousers, and their pet cat curled up in the shopping basket. Wilson, thinking of larger cats locked up in cages, headed for the entrance to the lion house. There he was joined by Morris, and Matt Kelly, the zoo's head keeper.

KELLY, a stocky, grizzled Irishman, had run from his home at the Western Gate and was wearing an overcoat, pyjamas and carpet slippers. On the way he passed circus workers leading ponies out of the King's Hall and tethering them under trees, away from sight of the fire. Kelly reached the lion house as the first firemen, from the nearby Upton Street district station, arrived to tackle the outbreak.

Station Officer Arthur Bray took one look at the blaze and radioed for reinforcements. The control-room staff ordered out another pump, a turntable ladder, and a control unit. Within the next half-hour the control-room was to receive a series of calls asking for the attendance to be increased to twenty pumps as the fire swept towards the lion house.

Under the same roof as the lion house, inside the entrance, was the zoo's parrot section, containing a hundred birds. Many of them were in cages against the wall of the building nearest the ballroom. Windows behind the cages were already cracking from the heat.

"Get these birds out of here, Matt," said Wilson. "Morris and I will see to the cats."

Morris fetched two rifles and twenty rounds of ammunition. Then he and Wilson went forward

Parrots gabbled catchphrases as they were taken to safety. And a jackass giggled hysterically

into the main portion of the lion house. In the first cage, Judith, a thirteen-year-old lioness, had come out of her cage and was stretching herself as they passed.

Farther along the row, the leopardesses, Michaela and Peta, and Samson, the leopard, always active at night, were prowling about their cages a little more impatiently than usual. Rita, the tigon, and Nizam, the Bengal tiger, were still heavy-eyed with sleep. They were frowning at the sixty-foot flames outside with no more concern than if their keeper had switched on a powerful electric light to rouse them.

The fire was advancing along the ballroom block at an angle which made the lioness's cage the hottest part of the lion house. Wilson and Morris took up their positions at that point. "They'll never save this place," Wilson said, "but we'll wait until the last moment to shoot the cats."

Shrill cries came from the parrot house a few yards away where Kelly was trying to organize the evacuation of the birds. The hysterical giggles of a laughing jackass rose above all the noises of the fire as Kelly considered the problem. The larger and more valuable birds were in fixed pens, one thirty-five feet high and fifty feet long, which were part of the building. The only hope of saving the birds was to transfer them to twenty portable cages, intended for macaws. Kelly had to move all the birds in a matter of minutes.

A crowd of people standing outside was eager to help. Firemen, policemen, local residents, Kelly's fourteen-year-old son Bonny, Wilson's daughter Fiona, Sir Leslie Joseph, managing director of Belle Vue, and Jim Betts, the general manager, all began to stuff the birds into portable cages.

Kelly went into the largest pen and climbed on to a ledge ten feet high to capture three varieties of hornbill, powerful birds with eighteen-inch-long beaks.

The small cages were crammed with birds of different species, many of them natural enemies. Kelly was amazed that they made no attempt to fight each other. He was even more surprised that they apparently did not resent the rough, inexperienced handling they received. A hornbill has been known to pierce a man's skull with its beak and the macaw which splits Brazil nuts can also remove fingers.

In the excitement the jackass kept up its cackling, and the parrots gabbled all their phrases: "Hallo!" "Pretty Cocky!" "Scratch a Poll!"

When the parrot house had been cleared Mrs. Wilson noticed that the rescued birds were shivering in the cages scattered around the yard, awash with water from the hoses and exposed to the cold January wind.

She organized a second "bird-lift," and the cages were moved into offices nearby.

A hundred yards' stretch of the building was now fiercely ablaze. Firemen operating hoses down-wind of the building had to turn their faces from the blistering heat. Flames reached across a ten-yard gap and caught an eighty-foot-high tower on the water-chute scenic railway. Only seven yards from the eastern end of the ballroom, now erupting blazing debris, was the lion house. The gap between the two buildings was blurred with smoke and steam.

"Surely, my husband isn't in there," said Mrs. Wilson. She suddenly realized that she had not seen him since the first alarm. To her, it seemed that the ballroom block must crash on to the lion house.

SHE ran into the yard, but firemen turned her back from the lion house. Mrs. Wilson began to walk back to the offices. Timber beams collapsed inside the ballroom. She turned again, dodged the firemen outside the lion house, and waded into the parrot section, now under eighteen inches of water and empty of everything else but steam.

"Willie, where are you?" she called. From the middle of the building she heard Wilson's voice. "I'm all right," he shouted. "Get out."

Mrs. Wilson went back to the offices and watched from a window facing the blaze. After she had gone, Wilson and Morris were alone in the lion house once more. They hardly spoke to each other. With the rifles crooked under their arms they leaned on the crush-rail in front of the cages and looked at Judith.

Wilson's black hair, tousled by cold water from the hoses and stiffened by steam from the hot water swilling round their legs, was standing wildly on end. The brim of Morris's trilby drooped over his glasses.

After a time, Morris walked to the other end of the cages. He found Nizam, the tiger, calmly watching the blaze through the window which normally gave its view of Belle Vue's famous fireworks displays. "You've never seen a show like this before," Morris whispered to the tiger. Then, he went back to the lioness's cage. Wilson was glad to see him return. Left completely on his own, he had found himself near to panic. Morris's stolid composure was comforting. The ex-policeman was himself reassured by the fierce little Scotsman's determination to stand by the animals until the last.

Wilson was convinced from his first impression

Continued on page 29

AFTER THE

by J. F. BROXHOLME

SPREADING out his left hand, Albert Thorpe looked thoughtfully at it as he walked through the gates of the county ground in the slanting sunlight. He was on his way to discuss with the skipper, as the senior professional did, the prospects for the day's play.

Senior pro! He smiled ruefully. This was his first game for the county side for five weeks and, if merit were the criterion, he wouldn't be playing now. This was his benefit match and he was taking part only because they could hardly play it without him.

Yet only a couple of seasons before he had been playing for England. Then a fast ball, rising sharply off a nasty pitch, had smashed his hand against the bat handle and it had never been the same since. Where before he had been able to turn the ball on almost any wicket, he was now unable to bowl for long. If he really tried to spin it, his hand ached abominably after a few overs. As a result he had spun it less and less, relying on flight and the guile that years of bowling had taught him, but the wickets had grown fewer and each had cost more runs.

He almost collided with one of the county committee men. "'Morning, Colonel Wagstaffe."

"Good morning, Albert. Wonderful day for you."

"Yes, it's grand, isn't it? I can do with it."

"Well, I think you'll do very well out of this match. Champions here, sunshine, should be the best gate of the season. How's the little boy?"

"Paul? Well, he's pulling round a bit, but it's been a nasty business. The doctor says he needs a lot of sun and sea air."

"That's tricky. You're a long way from sea air here. What are you planning to do?"

"I've taken a big plunge," said Albert. "Maybe I've bitten off more than I can chew, but I've agreed to buy a half share in an hotel in Cornwall, if my benefit makes the money they tell me it will. It'll take every penny but I think it's the answer."

Wagstaffe smiled. "Let's hope everything comes off for you. You deserve it. Good luck, Albert."

They shook hands. "Thanks."

He made his way towards the dressing-room, somehow more conscious than ever that this was the turning point in his life. And Peggy's. She'd had a thin time lately, what with nursing young Paul and the lack of money coming into the house. Everything had come at once, that was the trouble. . . .

Poor old Paul. It had given both of them a shock when his recovery was so slow. He'd been rudely healthy before the illness, and they had expected him to improve quickly after the crisis was over. In fact, his progress had been so unsatisfactory that, at Peggy's insistence, Albert had called in a specialist.

He could remember the scene so vividly. The specialist had examined Paul, and then said: "He's a very sick boy, you know."

They had spoken almost in chorus: "But what can we *do*?"

And the reply: "Paul's lungs are now weak. The only real strengthener is time, but it would help if he could live in a clean atmosphere, go out in the sun a lot. Frankly, the industrial atmosphere here isn't much good to him; and a heavy fog could be really dangerous."

"Where then?" Albert had asked.

"Somewhere by the sea. Preferably somewhere warm. The South Coast. We don't want him exposed to a lot of chill north-east winds."

Then Peggy put the question that was troubling both of them now. "Will he," she asked, "recover completely?"

"In the right conditions, yes," the specialist had answered. "Otherwise he might be left with a weak chest all his life."

It was as clear as that, and the benefit match, which until then had been something nice to look forward to, a useful windfall, now became a matter of the most vital importance.

"Hallo," said Alan Standing, the captain, as Albert came through the door of the dressing-room. "Glorious day. You'll be a millionaire soon. How's the hand?"

"About the same, thanks. All right till it has some work to do."

Standing nodded sympathetically. "What about this lot then? Can we do anything?"

Albert grinned. "Well, first we win the toss."

"And then we bat for as long as we can."

"Right."

"My own thoughts entirely," said Standing. "They're a tough lot. Planning's so simple. Win the toss and bat a long time; lose it and bowl a length."

"Tactical genius," said Albert

"Great minds think alike." They both smiled. The other players began to arrive.

HALF an hour later Albert exercised his privilege of walking out to the middle to toss up. The beneficiary always tossed; that was one of the things he liked about cricket, and the game was full of similar little gestures.

Martin Hinton was leading the champions. Here was a gilded young man indeed: independently wealthy and playing purely for fun, but playing as well as any batsman in the world; captain not just of the champions, but of England.

Albert couldn't help envying Hinton a little, but that didn't alter the fact that he liked him. He had been in the England side when the young amateur first played for his country and they had always got on well.

Hinton wished him luck and they shook hands to a good-natured cheer from the crowd. The half-crown spun through the air and Hinton called wrongly. Albert gave the thumbs-up sign to the pavilion and, as he bent to pick up the coin, Hinton playfully ruffled his hair.

It was all easy and pleasant and Albert was enjoying himself. He had a feeling that this was going to be a good day, and so it was. The wicket was beautifully true and fast enough for stroke play, and in the bright sunshine the home batsmen settled comfortably.

Through the long day the runs piled up, a wicket falling occasionally, but never often enough to be worrying. It was a long time since the county's batsmen had had such a good day; a long time, too, since the illustrious bowlers of the champion county had toiled so fruitlessly.

Albert's contribution at number seven was a neat thirty. By close of play only eight wickets had fallen and 327 runs were on the board.

Peggy enjoyed her day on the pavilion balcony, watching the large crowd and thinking occasionally and rather guiltily of clicking turnstiles. Later, when Albert arrived home, he heard her humming in the kitchen as she prepared his meal, and she smiled at him as she used to. The evening passed pleasantly enough, and so did Sunday.

That night they were in bed early and Albert was quickly asleep. At two o'clock Peggy shook his shoulder.

"Albert," she said. "Albert, wake up."

He stirred unwillingly. "What is it, dear?"

"Listen."

Straining his ears in the darkness, he wondered what he was listening for. There was a roll of thunder and, as it died away, the sharp rattle of heavy rain.

"Rain." He swore. "God, why does it have to rain?"

He lay back on the pillow, listening sadly; but gradually, as the heavy drops drummed down, he drifted into sleep.

When he awoke next morning the sun was

With Albert's whole future at stake, the crowd wanted him to skittle the county

RAIN

"But . . . does it matter who wins this match?" Peggy asked. "The only people it's important to are you, me and Paul"

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HESELTINE

hampions. It could be his greatest triumph—yet Peggy had begged him to fail

SOMETIME about 1340 an eminent Londoner went out to Kent and built himself a handsome mansion. The Great Hall in which he dined with his friends is probably the finest of the 14th Century. But it is not for this alone that people travel to Penshurst Place today. The later additions to the building, beautifully mellowed by time; the art treasures and other links with the illustrious Sidney family; the formal gardens and ancient trees and friendly Kentish landscape—all make your journey to Penshurst a memorable pilgrimage.

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shining brightly enough to pierce the fabric of the bedroom curtains. Peggy was busy in the kitchen, and Albert went downstairs in his dressing-gown.

"Sun's shining again," he said.

"I wonder you could sleep," Peggy said. "That rain fairly lashed down for a good two hours. There won't be much play today."

"I don't know. The ground drains fairly well, you know, and it's been a bit parched."

Then he looked out of the window at the street. The road surface was almost dry and the heat of the sun was coming strongly through the glass already.

"Peggy," he said, his voice suddenly grim. "The wicket's going to be sticky."

"So what? You've batted."

"You're missing the point, Peg. They'll be batting on it. If they're out for, let's see, less than a hundred and seventy-seven, they'll have to follow on; and if they follow on, they might be out twice in a day."

"You mean it could finish today, and you'd lose a day of your benefit?"

"You know what that wicket's like. When it's drying there isn't a worse in England. I used to pray for pitches like the one we'll have today."

"Have you the bowlers to get them out?" The news had shaken Peggy. "After all, they're the champions."

"We've only one spinner in the side, lass. That's me. They played three quickies for safety's sake."

Peggy was looking worried. "So it's up to you?"

"Yes."

"What are you going to do?"

"Do?" Albert gave her a startled look. Then he turned away and said quietly: "I'm a professional cricketer, dear. I'm paid to do my job to the best of my ability."

"But . . . does it matter who wins this match? I'm sure it doesn't. It'll make no difference to the crowd or to the club if they bat all day and the match lasts three days. The only people it's important to are you, me and Paul."

Albert said slowly: "I don't think you know quite what you're saying——"

Peggy said: "I'm only thinking about Paul. . . ."

Albert's thoughts were racing as he walked the half mile to the ground. It was true: all he need do was bowl badly, and he'd bowled badly enough lately anyway.

But after a lifetime of trying hard, could he stop trying now? All the same, he'd be all sorts of a fool to throw money away, and Paul must surely be his first consideration.

Nobody need know. His bowling wasn't what it had been, so nobody would know. That thought hammered at him, too.

The skipper was already there when Albert walked into the dressing-room.

"'Morning," said Standing. "Wicket's wet. It'll be sticky later."

"I know."

"That gives us a good chance, and I think Saturday's batting deserves it. I'd like to beat them."

"So would I."

"Isn't it a lovely thought?" Standing's voice was full of enthusiasm. "We've got them on a really nasty one. With any sort of luck it could even be over today. . . ."

He stopped, realizing what he had said. Albert spoke bitterly: "Yes, skipper. It could even be over today."

Standing suddenly noticed how deep the lines were etched round Albert's eyes and mouth. "I'm as sorry as I could be," he said. "It's not fair, and to have to be the architect of it. . . . I've half a mind not to put you on at all."

"That would take some explaining to the committee," Albert said.

THE players began to arrive. They changed and watched from the window as, at eleven thirty, Standing and Hinton went out to have a look at the pitch. When Standing came back, he paused in the doorway and caught Albert's eye. "It's wet," he said. "We're having another look in an hour."

At half past twelve the captains disagreed. Standing, to the crowd's astonishment, thought the pitch still too wet. It seemed odd to everybody. Standing should have been eager to get at the champions.

He whispered to Albert: "Did my best. I wanted to postpone a start till after lunch, but Hinton's so keen on cricket he'll play on anything. It was the only way I could think of to shorten the day."

"Thanks, skipper." Albert's face expressed his gratitude.

The umpires decided the wicket was playable. Standing had to declare and, at a quarter to one the players took the field.

Albert tested the turf knowingly. It couldn't be worse, as far as he was concerned: hard underneath, but soft and wet on top, and almost steaming under the hot sun. There would be three-quarters of an hour on a comparatively

"These Cotswold villages sure do have quaint names, Elmer"

easy wicket to lunch, with the pitch drying gradually, then forty minutes of lunch for it to dry to the point where spin bowling would begin to be unplayable.

Three years ago he'd helped to shoot out the Australians for eighty-six on a wicket like this. . . .

The fast-medium bowlers opened the bowling. There was no point in bowling the spinner yet. With the wicket as wet as this, the quickies would be more economical, even more dangerous. In fact, a wicket did fall, just before lunch.

As the players were taking the field after the interval, Standing told Albert: "I'll delay putting you on as long as I can." That wouldn't be long. Albert knew. And suddenly he came to a decision: *damn cricket, damn the club, damn everything.* Just for once he was going all out for himself.

Burrell and Slingsby, the quick bowlers were on, and the crowd was beginning to demand that one of them make way for Albert. A beautiful drive raced past him at extra cover. Then another. The pitch was no use to the fast men.

A third drive, in a matter of five minutes, went to the off-boundary, and Albert went to retrieve the ball. It was brought to him by a boy of twelve or so, holding it flat on his hand, as he would an apple for the teacher. Albert smiled at him, and the boy smiled shyly back. This was a thing that had always puzzled Albert, his popularity with the youngsters.

"Why don't they put you on, Mr. Thorpe?" the boy asked. "You could get them out, couldn't you?"

Albert smiled again. "I don't know, lad," he said. "These boys are good."

"Well, I think you could," said the boy. "I've bet a shilling that you'll take six wickets this afternoon, but if you're not on soon, you won't have time."

As he threw the ball back to the wicket-keeper and returned to his place in the field, Albert was thoughtful. *Blast youthful faith,* he thought. These kids would have to learn soon enough that idols have feet of clay.

But what would Paul say, in the future, if he ever found out; or even guessed?

He was brought in to slip for the next over, and, his mind far from the game, knew nothing about a sharp chance that flew just wide of him. As the buzz of conversation such a miss invariably causes died away round the ground, a voice called clearly: "Stop thinking about your money, Thorpe. You're playing cricket."

Albert stared in the direction from which the voice had come. *Thorpe, you're playing cricket.* He felt guilty. He should be playing cricket; that was what he was paid for. Why was he even considering doing anything else?

He walked over to Standing. "Mind if I have a go, skipper?"

"Are you sure you know what you're doing?"

"Yes, I'm sure."

"All right, next over at the top end." Standing was obviously glad to be rid of the responsibility.

As Albert paced out his six-step run, there was a cheer from the crowd. They'd seen him turn in some beautiful performances on this very wicket. Maybe he hadn't been bowling well lately, but he was an old England bowler, this was a wicket to suit him, and it was his benefit match. The stage was set. The crowd had a strong sense of the dramatic.

Albert moved lightly over his short run. From behind his back his left arm swept straight and high, and the ball pulled the batsman forward to drive, then turned sharply away, and the wicket-keeper took it wide on the off-side.

The wicket was turning, no doubt about that. His next ball came across sharply, beating the bat but missing the stumps. Albert smiled grimly. If ever a wicket was his, this one was.

Be damned to the money, be damned to everything! The drying wicket smelled good and he sniffed the air appreciatively.

The third ball pulled the batsman forward out of his crease, then nipped nastily through the gate between bat and pad. Jenkins did a neat stumping. . . .

Hinton was taking guard now; poised, confident and immensely quick on his feet, he was one of the best players of spin bowling in the world. Albert bowled to him, and Hinton, moving right forward or right back, batting firmly and decisively, played out the rest of the over.

A change of ends in the next over, and Albert was bowling to Harrington, a youngster full of promise but lacking in experience, particularly on wickets like this. A ball that suddenly seemed fuller-pitched than he expected, passed under his bat as he played back. Albert's jubilant "Owizee" floated over the field, and Harrington began walking back to the pavilion.

Brown, next man in, played a streaky shot to the first ball he received. It rolled gently to cover and Hinton managed to sneak a run.

Now the England captain tried to take command. His strategy was obvious: score twos and fours or not at all. He'd take Albert's bowling and let the others play Slingsby. He was batting beautifully, but he couldn't just stay there; runs were important, and the hands of the three men in the covers began to sting as he drove powerfully.

For two overs he hammered away, then Albert bowled him one that was very well pitched up. It went through the covers like a bullet. The next ball, apparently identical, he attempted to deal with in the same way, but it was a little slower, a little shorter. The catch was taken coolly by Standing at extra cover.

The crowd was humming excitedly. "Now then, Albert," somebody shouted, "the hutch is open."

And open it was. On this wicket the rabbits were no match for good spin bowling, and with Slingsby collecting a couple of the tail-enders, the innings closed for seventy-six. Albert had taken seven for twenty-two in an hour, and the champions must follow on.

But now his hand was beginning to ache. Down the guiders the pain was reaching, and towards the end of the innings, he hadn't been turning the ball quite so much.

In the dressing-room he filled a washbasin with hot water and plunged his hand in. The heat was painful, but he could feel the blood rushing into it. For a good five minutes he kept it in the water, and when it came out, red and a little sore, the guider pain had almost gone.

The excited crowd shouted encouragement as the players came out again. Albert's name was on a thousand lips, and Peggy was suddenly on her feet calling to him too. It happened almost before she realized it. "Good luck, Albert," she called, and waved her arm.

She could see, even at that distance, how the smile spread across his face. Albert waved back. He took a deep breath and a load seemed to have been lifted from him. He walked purposefully over to Standing and said: "Shall I go on straight away?"

Standing looked at him. "Intent on suicide?"

"Yes," said Albert firmly. "I am."

He took the new ball from the umpire, bent, and wiped it across the grass, rubbing away the shine, grinning as the crowd applauded the move.

Hinton was opening the innings himself. If he could keep going through the forty minutes to tea, the wicket would begin to ease.

For several overs the battle went on. Three wickets fell, but Hinton was playing resolutely. Albert could feel pain gradually taking the use from his fingers.

He was bowling to Hinton now. A ball went down, not spinning at all, just pitched to a length, to rest his hand. Hinton realized what was happening, stepped out to the next delivery, and drove straight.

The ball was coming like a bullet, eighteen inches above Albert's head and a little to the left. He jumped and got his hand to it, but couldn't hold it, and the ball flew upwards. A searing pain shot through his hand and he knew instantly that it must be badly damaged; but desperately he looked for the ball and, as it fell, he dived and caught it inches from the ground, in his right.

The pandemonium caused by the superb catch faltered and died away as Albert was seen to be walking off with Hinton's arm round his shoulders, nursing his damaged hand, his face distorted with pain.

"It's his hand. It's his hand," Peggy cried as she saw them. She jumped from her seat and ran into the pavilion.

In the dressing-room a doctor, a member of the county committee, was already examining the hand. When Peggy came in, Albert gave her a weary smile. "Sorry, love, I just couldn't help myself," he said.

Peggy kissed him quickly. "How bad is it?" she asked the doctor.

"It's pretty bad," he replied. "Heavy bruising certainly, and there may or may not be bones broken."

"It's no matter," said Albert. "I'll be playing no more. It's painful, though."

Hinton turned and went out. A few minutes later they could hear his voice on the loudspeaker: "This is Martin Hinton. That catch, that wonderful catch you saw Albert Thorpe take a few minutes ago, was probably the last thing you'll see him do on the cricket field. His hand, as you know, was weak but, bowling in intense pain, he has played so well that he's spoiled his own benefit match. His own good play has cost him a lot of money. Now the members of my team are coming among you so that you can make sure he doesn't suffer by it."

Hinton took a collecting box and walked into the members' enclosure. . . .

The moment was a perfect one. Out on the pitch Slingsby and Burrell were bowling with great hostility, and the wicket had dried enough now for them to be able to make the ball fly. They were very obviously going to smash their way through what remained of the champions' batting. It was years since the county had beaten them, and the crowd was relishing the prospect.

In the members' enclosure, Wagstaffe caught Hinton's eye and beckoned. He took out his cheque book and said loudly: "It's well worth fifty to me." He broke off, as he was signing his name, to applaud as a wicket fell.

The cheque fluttered into the box, and Wagstaffe's example was widely followed, as members with pens in their hands, delightedly filling in details on their score cards, transferred their attention for a moment to their cheque books. And round the ground the same generous mood prevailed. Hands reached willingly into notecases.

An hour later Albert and Peggy were out on the balcony watching the match nearing its end, when Hinton approached softly.

"How is it?" Hinton asked.

Albert grinned at him. "It's a bit painful, but seeing this is helping a lot. What do you reckon it'll be? An innings and how many?"

"A lot. And I'm very glad you did it."

"So am I," said Peggy.

"But I didn't come up here to be crowed over," said Hinton. "I've got some news for you. They're still counting that collection downstairs. I don't know what it'll come to eventually, but it was thirteen hundred pounds when I left to come up here."

"It was *what?*" Albert looked stunned.

"You heard me." Hinton, Albert suddenly noticed, looked very happy. "I couldn't have emptied their pockets more easily if I'd had a gun in my hand. What're you planning to do?"

"I can answer that right now," Albert said. "I'm going into partnership in an hotel on the South Coast."

"I'll come and stay with you sometime."

"Martin, I'm very grateful for this. I heard your appeal. It was very nice of you."

"They've had their money's worth," said Hinton. "All of them. Goodbye, Albert, and good luck."

Albert took his outstretched hand. He said: "It's a good job I shake hands with my right." THE END

© *J. F. Broxholme, 1958*

A bud unfolds

A month ago she travelled on my bus,
In gym dress clad; her satchel packed with books;
Her hair style simple; shoes, low-heeled; no fuss
Or frills to glamorize her schoolgirl looks.

Today the bud unfolds. A business girl,
She mounts the bus in high-heeled shoes. Her dress
Form-fitting, feminine; her hair a-curl;
A nymph of newly minted loveliness.

Complexioned, coiffured, charming, choicely groomed
To enter in the wider school of life,
Fulfilling Nature's law, the bud has bloomed. . . .
What happy man will win her for a wife?

NOEL SCOTT.

EYES—I

What we learn merely through the ear makes less impression upon our minds than what is presented to the trustworthy eye.

Horace

HORNBLOWER'S HURRICANE

by C. S. FORESTER

ILLUSTRATED BY WYLES

THE first of the thirteen saluting guns went off as the Red Ensign came slowly down from the mizzen peak of the flagship. It was a long, long descent. When it ended, Admiral Lord Hornblower's three years as Commander-in-Chief in West Indian waters were over.

To Admiral Ransome passed the splendour of command. It was Ransome who would decide the fate of young Hudnutt, the marine bandsman now awaiting court martial for refusing to flat the Bs in the march "Dondello"; his artistic conscience would not permit it.

Hornblower favoured clemency for Hudnutt. His lovely wife Barbara—in Jamaica to make the passage home with her husband—was desperately concerned for the boy. But already Ransome, rigid and unimaginative, had made it plain that he would do nothing to interfere with the navy's inevitable sentence for any act of disobedience—death or a murderous flogging.

Now there were ruffles of drums, bugle-calls, pipes as Hornblower went down the ship's side—a half-pay officer without an appointment.

He might have felt an agony of regret, but instant distraction awaited him. "My Lord," said Spendlove, his secretary, beside him in the stern-sheets. "That prisoner—Hudnutt, the bandsman. He's escaped, My Lord. He broke prison during the night."

PART TWO

The Hunt For Hudnutt

So now Hudnutt's fate was settled beyond all doubt. Nothing could save him now. No deserter, no escaped prisoner, ever succeeded in evading recapture in Jamaica. It was an island, there was a standing reward of £10 sterling for the apprehension of a deserter.

It was a sombre enough thought to occupy Hornblower's mind as he and Gerard, his flag lieutenant, climbed into the Governor's carriage to be driven to Government House—where he and Barbara were to be guests until the packet sailed for England.

But they had hardly gone a mile when they met a lively cavalcade clattering down on horseback towards them. First Hornblower saw Barbara. His Excellency the Governor rode on one side of her and his wife, Lady Hooper, on the other, chattering eagerly. Behind them came a mixed party, of aides-de-camp and civilians; at the rear rode the Assistant Provost Marshal and two troopers of his guard.

"Ha, Hornblower!" called the Governor, reining up. "You can join us in our hunt."

"What are you hunting, sir?" asked Hornblower, a little bewildered.

"That deserter of yours. He might show us some sport," answered Hooper.

They were hunting man, the biggest game of all—but Hudnutt, dreamy, scatterbrained Hudnutt, would be poor game. Two coloured servants rode in the party, each holding a leash of bloodhounds, tawny and black; grim, horrible creatures. Hornblower wanted to have nothing to do with this hunt, nothing whatever. It was horrible to see Barbara taking part in it.

At the dockyard gate, at the high palisade, the cortège halted. "Come on," said the Assistant Provost Marshal, and he and his guard took the bloodhounds into the prison, where presumably the hounds smelled at the prisoner's bedding. Then they reappeared at the door, smelling at the ground below a hole in the roof where the thatch had been torn away.

Instantly the dogs caught the scent, and they came pelting across the dockyard again. They threw themselves against the fifteen-foot palisade, slavering with excitement.

"Bring 'em round to this side!" shouted the Governor. He turned to Hornblower. "Your man's a marine, isn't he. Even a sailor would find it hard to scale that palisade."

The bloodhounds were brought round through the dockyard gate again and led to the corresponding point on the outside of the palisade. They caught the scent again in a flash, throwing themselves against their leashes.

"Gone away!" yelled the Governor, spurring his horse after them.

Straight up the road they went, heading for the open country and the Blue Mountains beyond.

The horsemen ahead reined back into a trot, and Hornblower's coachman followed their example, so that the progress of the carriage became more sedate.

"A hot enough scent, My Lord," said Gerard, peering forward at the bloodhounds still straining at their leashes.

"And yet this road must have been well travelled since he went along it," said Spendlove, Hornblower's secretary.

"Ah!" said Gerard, still peering forward. "They're leaving the road."

As the carriage reached the corner they saw that the horsemen had turned up a broad lane through fields of cane; the coachman, nothing daunted, swung up into the lane after them, but after two more miles of rapid progress he pulled his horses to a halt.

"A check, Hornblower," said the Governor. "This lane fords the Hope River here."

The halted cavalcade was breathing the horses; Barbara waved her gloved hand to him.

"No scent the other side," explained the Governor. He called to the men in charge of the bloodhounds, "Cast upstream as well as down. And on both sides."

"Your man knew we'd have bloodhounds after him," said the Governor. "He waded along the river. But he has to come out sooner or later, and we'll pick up the scent again there."

Barbara guided her horse to the side of the carriage, and raised her veil to speak to Hornblower.

"Good morning, dear," she said.

"Good morning," said Hornblower.

It was hard to say more, when the events of the last hour or two, and all their implications, were allowed for. And Barbara was hardly flushed with the heat and the exercise. She looked drawn and tired; her smile was positively wan. It occurred to Hornblower that she was participating in this hunt as unwillingly as he was.

"Come and sit in the carriage, dear," he said, scrambling down to help her.

"We should have heard something from the bloodhounds by now," said the Governor. "Can he have climbed a tree?"

A man could be more resourceful than any fox, Hornblower knew. But it was an unexpected aspect of Hudnutt's character.

"Not a trace of scent, Your Excellency," said the Assistant Provost Marshal trotting up.

"Oh well then, we'll go home again. A poor day's sport after all. We'll precede you, Lady Hornblower, with your permission."

"We'll see you at the house, dear Lady Hornblower," echoed Lady Hooper.

The carriage turned again and followed the horsemen down the lane.

"You've had a busy morning, I fear, my dear," said Hornblower; with his staff sitting across the carriage from them he had to retain a certain formality of tone.

"Not busy at all," answered Barbara, turning her head to meet his glance. "A very pleasant morning, thank you, dear. And you—your ceremonial went off without a hitch, I hope?"

"Well enough, thank you."

THE carriage went on, and conversation proceeded fitfully in the heat. It was not long before they swung through the gates of Government House, with Hornblower acknowledging the salute of the sentry, and drew up at the door.

It was later that day that Barbara made her request to Hornblower. "Dear," she said, "would you please give me some money?"

"Of course," said Hornblower.

He felt a delicacy about this which most men would laugh at. Barbara had brought a good

So much depended on the Admiral

now: the vessel, its

crew, the life of the woman he

loved. And his strength was failing fast . . .

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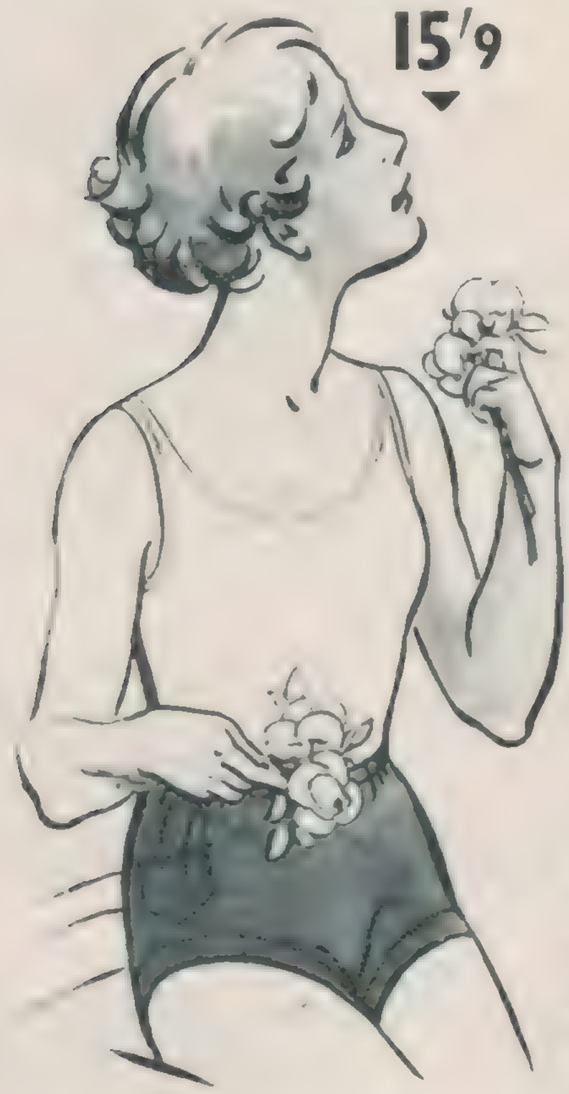

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deal of money to their marriage, which of course was now his property, and he felt an absurd guilt that she should have to ask him for money.

"How much would you like, dear?" he asked.

"Two hundred pounds," said Barbara.

Two hundred pounds? Two hundred pounds! That was something entirely different. It was a fortune. What in the world would Barbara want two hundred pounds for here in Jamaica?

"Two hundred pounds?" He said it aloud this time.

"Yes, dear, if you please."

"It will be my business to tip the butler and grooms, of course," he said, still trying to find reasons why she should think she needed this stupendous sum.

"Yes, no doubt, dear," said Barbara, patiently. "But I need some money for other purposes."

"Of course, of course," said Hornblower hastily. He could not bear it that Barbara should have to plead with him. All he had was hers. "I'll write an order on Summers," he said. "He's Coutt's correspondent in Kingston."

"Thank you, dear," said Barbara.

He could not ask her why she wanted the money. If she didn't choose to tell him, he must rest content not to know. He had no wish to pry.

And then he thought of a possible explanation. Lady Hooper was a keen and clever card player. Presumably Barbara had lost heavily to her.

"You are the dearest man in the world," said Barbara, and he realized

EYES—2

The eye is the window of the soul; even an animal looks for a man's intentions right into his eyes.

H. Powers

that her eyes had been fixed on his face for the last several seconds.

"It is my greatest happiness to hear you say so," he answered, with a sincerity that no man could doubt.

Then a recollection of their position in this house, as mere guests, came to him. "And we shall be the most unpopular people in Jamaica if we keep Their Excellencies waiting for their dinner," he said.

They were only guests now, mere hangers on. That was what Hornblower thought at dinner time when the new commander-in-chief sat in the place of honour.

"Your marine hasn't been apprehended yet," said Hooper, turning to Hornblower.

"Not my marine any longer, sir," laughed Hornblower. "Admiral Ransome's marine now."

"I understand there's no doubt that he *will* be apprehended," said Ransome.

"We've not lost a deserter yet during the time of my appointment here," said Hooper.

Hornblower stole a glance at Barbara across the table. She was eating her dinner with apparent composure; he had feared lest this reminder should upset her, for he knew how strongly she felt about Hudnutt's fate.

After dinner, when the men and the ladies met again in the drawing-room and the first new guests were being announced, Hornblower was able to exchange a word or two with Barbara and to see that she was happy and not over-tired. Her smile was bright and her eyes sparkling.

OTHER guests were streaming in; a sudden influx of blue and gold and white marked the arrival of Coleman, Triton's captain, and a couple of his lieutenants. Ransome himself presented Coleman to Barbara, and Hornblower could not help but hear the conversation.

"Captain Coleman is an old friend of mine," said Barbara. "You were Perfecto Coleman in those days, weren't you, captain?"

"And you were Lady Leighton, ma'am," said Coleman.

A harmless enough remark, but enough to shatter Hornblower's frail happiness, to darken the brightly lit room, to set the babble of conversation in the room roaring in Hornblower's ears like a torrent through the din of which Barbara's words pierced shrill like a whistle note.

"Captain Coleman was my first husband's flag - lieutenant," said Barbara.

She had had a first husband; she had been Lady Leighton. Hornblower nearly always contrived to forget this. Rear-Admiral Sir Percy Leighton had died for his country, of wounds received in the battle of Rosas Bay, thirteen full years ago. But Barbara had been Leighton's wife before she had been Hornblower's. Hornblower hardly ever thought about it, but when he did he still experienced a jealousy which he knew to be insane.

Captain Knyvett had entered the room, bluff and grizzled, dressed in blue broadcloth with unpretentious brass buttons. As he approached, Hornblower could only with an effort remember him as the captain of the Jamaica packet, the Pretty Jane.

"We sail a week from today, My Lord," said Knyvett.

"Excellent," said Hornblower.

"You will be my only passengers," said Knyvett.

"Excellent," repeated Hornblower.

"Her Ladyship, of course, is familiar with the deckhouse that will be your accommodation. I shall ask her if she can suggest any addition that will add to your comfort, My Lord."

"Very well."

Knyvett drifted away after this cold reception, and it was only after he had gone that Hornblower realized that Knyvett must have received an impression of a top-lofty peer with hardly bare politeness for a mere packet-captain.

He regretted it, and made a desperate effort to get himself under control

NEW-STYLE CONVICTS GO OUT TO WORK

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IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

again. A glance at Barbara revealed her chatting animatedly with young Bonner, the fishing-boat owner and general merchant with the shady reputation, against whom Hornblower had already warned her. That could have added to his misery if it were possible.

"Can we tempt you, Lord Hornblower?" asked an old lady standing by the card table in an alcove. She was a good whist player, Hornblower remembered.

"Why certainly, with pleasure," he made himself say.

He had something to think about now; for the first few hands it was hard to concentrate, but his usual skill soon asserted itself, and he began to relax.

When the card playing was finished and the guests beginning to leave, he was able to meet Barbara's eye with a more natural expression, and Barbara, who had noticed his discomfiture, was able to tell herself with relief that her husband was coming out of his unpredictable mood.

Hornblower's last few days in Jamaica were difficult ones. There was almost nothing for him to do as the Pretty Jane made ready for sea. On the other hand there was the small comfort that Hudnutt had so far succeeded in evading capture; Hornblower honestly feared that if he should be apprehended and sentenced while they were in still in the island, Barbara might take action herself with personal appeals to Ransome or even to the Governor.

Barbara actually seemed to have forgotten about the case, which was more than Hornblower had. Hudnutt was a more capable person than he had ever imagined, seeing that he had been able to maintain himself free from capture for a week now—unless perhaps he was dead. That might be best for Hudnutt.

At last Knyvett, the packet captain, came with the news that the Pretty Jane was almost ready for sea. "The last of the cargo's going on board now, My Lord," he said. "The logwood's all in and the coir is on the quay. If Your Lordship and Her Ladyship will come on board this evening we'll sail with the land breeze at dawn."

"Thank you, captain," said Hornblower. "I am greatly obliged."

The Pretty Jane was a flush-decked brig, save that amidships she carried a small but substantial deckhouse for her passengers. Barbara had inhabited it for five weeks on the outward voyage. That evening they entered it together, with all the bustle of the ship's getting ready for sea going on around them.

"This case, ma'am?" asked the servant who was bringing their baggage on board.

"That? Oh, I've asked the captain about that already. It's to go in the steerage."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Delicacies in tin boxes," explained Barbara to Hornblower. "I brought them all the way out for you to enjoy while going home, dear."

"You are too good to me," said Hornblower.

"What is coir?" asked Barbara, looking out to see one of the final bales going down the hatchway.

"The hairy husks of coconuts," explained Hornblower. "They weave coco matting from it by the mile in England now."

"And logwood?"

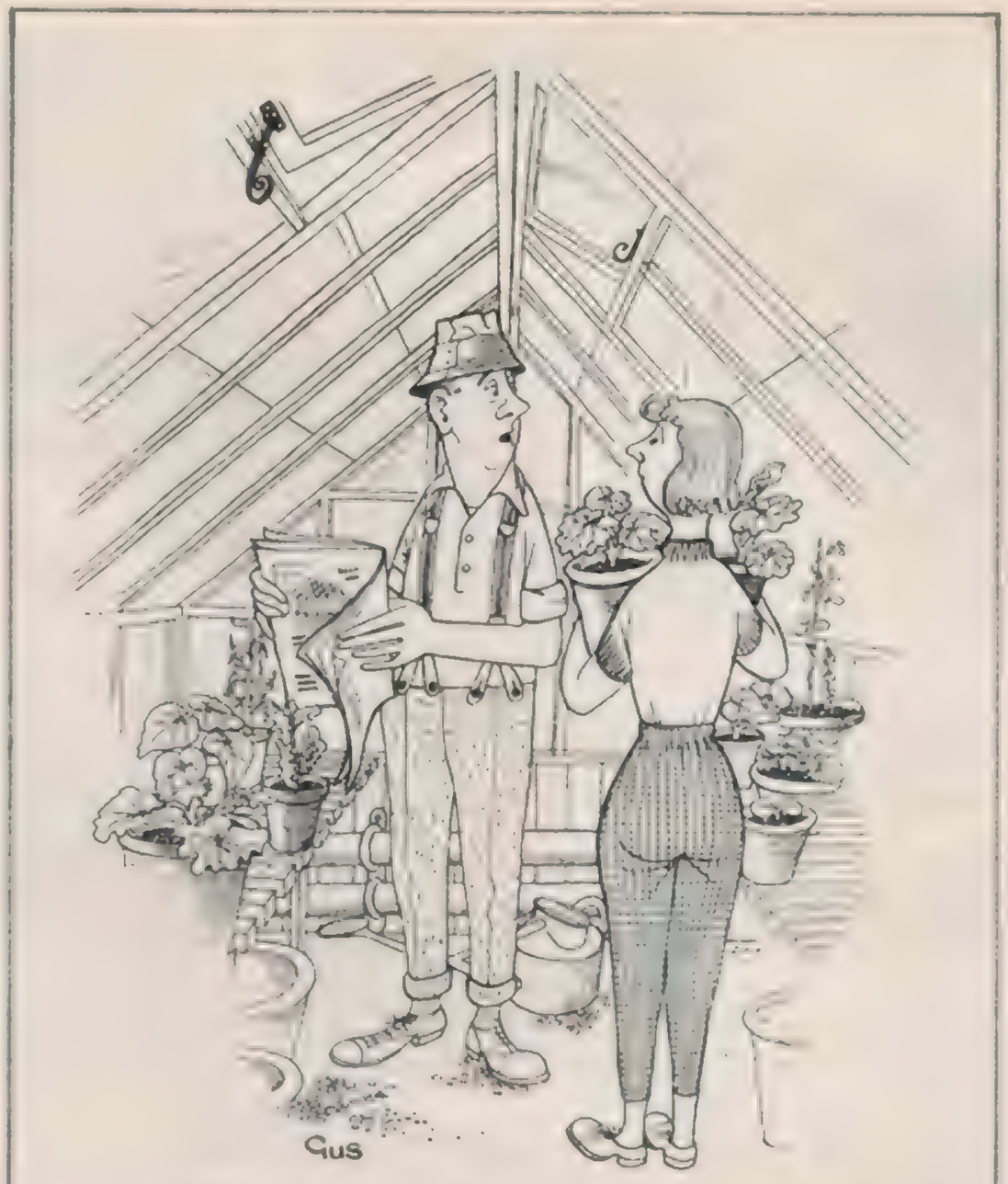
"They extract a dye from it. A bright red dye."

"Here's Their Excellencies coming, My Lord," warned Gerard, arriving at the deckhouse door.

That meant the final goodbyes, in the dying evening. A painful, sad moment. Goodbye to friends and to acquaintances, goodbye to Jamaica and to the command-in-chief. . . .

In the next few days, Hornblower surprised himself at the ease with which he accustomed himself to being a passenger. Nothing mattered during those golden days, as the Pretty Jane thrashed her way northward.

Yet his instincts were only dormant. One evening, when they were truly in the Atlantic, he felt restless and disturbed for the first time since leaving Jamaica. There was something heavy in the breathing of the air, and something unusual about the swell that was



"Greenhouse reminder for south-east districts—early September. . . . Take in half-hardy annuals for the winter . . . take out glass for Farnborough Air Show"

rolling the Pretty Jane so heavily. A gale before morning, he decided.

Several times in the night he woke to find the ship still rolling heavily.

A clatter outside awoke Barbara. "What's that?" she asked sleepily.

"Only the deadlights, dear," he answered.

Someone had slammed the deadlights against the deckhouse windows and clamped them home—Knyvett must be expecting to ship some heavy seas. Barbara went back to sleep, and Hornblower actually followed her example, but in half an hour he was awake again. The wind was stronger, and the ship was working considerably in the swell, so that everything was groaning and creaking.

"Awake, dear?" said a small voice from the other side of the deckhouse.

"Yes," answered Hornblower.

"It seems to be getting rough."

"A little," he said. "There's nothing to worry about."

It was pitch dark in the deckhouse with the deadlights shut, and, perhaps because of the cessation of ventilation, it was now overpoweringly hot despite the gale. The Pretty Jane was leaping about extravagantly, every now and then lying over so far that Hornblower feared lest Barbara should be rolled out of her bunk.

Then he was conscious of a change in the vessel's behaviour, of a difference in the thunderous creaking that filled the darkness. Knyvett had hove the Pretty Jane to; she was not lying over, but she was pitching fantastically, indicating a really heavy sea outside. Hornblower wanted so much to go out and see for himself.

"Awake, dear?" he asked.

"Yes," said Barbara.

"I shall go out on deck if you do not mind my leaving you," he said.

Hornblower groped for his trousers and his shoes and felt his way to the door. Long experience warned him to brace himself as he unfastened it, but even so he was a little surprised at the raging wind that awaited him. He stepped over the coaming and managed to slam the door. The wind was tremendous, but even more surprising still was its warmth. He balanced himself on the heaving deck in the hot noisy darkness, and timed his rush to the wheel, where Knyvett stood.

"Hurricane!" Knyvett shouted.

"Likely enough," shouted Hornblower in reply.

They were in very considerable danger. The Pretty Jane might not endure the pounding she would have to undergo, and in any case, with the considerable leeway she was making they might be cast ashore, and utterly destroyed, on San Domingo or Puerto Rico or some intervening cay.

The wind shrieked at them, and a combination of wind and wave laid Pretty Jane over, over until the deck was almost vertical, with Hornblower hanging on as his feet could gain no hold on the planking. A wave burst against her exposed bottom clean over her, cascading round them, and then she came slowly back again. No ship could be expected to endure that sort of thing for long.

Daylight was coming. As Hornblower looked aloft in the first faint light he saw a hump, a bubble, appear on the main yard, and the bubble promptly burst into fragments. The wind was tearing the sail from its gaskets. The process was repeated along the yard, as the wind with fingers of steel pried into the solid roll of the sail to tear it loose, rip it open, split it into ribbons, and then tear off the ribbons to whirl them away to leeward.

Here was the ship's carpenter trying to say something to the captain—it was impossible to speak intelligibly in that wind but he held up one hand with the fingers spread. *Five feet of water in the hold, then.* But the carpenter repeated the gesture. Then he tried again. *Two spreadings of the fingers—ten feet of water,* then. It could hardly be the case, but it was true—the heavy heavings of the Pretty Jane showed she was water-logged.

Then Hornblower remembered the cargo with which she was laden. Logwood and coir; logwood floated only sluggishly, but coir—coconut fibre—was one of the most buoyant substances known. It was the coir that was keeping Pretty Jane afloat even though she was full of water.

So perhaps they had another hour or two of life before them.

Perhaps. Another wave, cascading green over Pretty Jane's upturned side, brought a grim warning that it might not be as long as that. And amid the rumble and the roar of the bursting wave, even as he hung on desperately, Hornblower was conscious of a succession of other sounds, harder and sharper, and of a jarring of the deck under his feet.

The deckhouse! It was lifting on its bolts under the impact of the water. It could not be expected to stand that battering long.

Clinging to the binnacle, Hornblower went through some seconds of mental agony, the worst he had ever known in his life. To leave Barbara in the deckhouse meant her certain death. The alternative was to bring her out here upon the wave-swept deck. Tied to the mast, she would live as long as she could endure the buffeting and the exposure, or until the Pretty Jane broke up into fragments.

He made the decision. He awaited a comparatively calm moment, and then made the perilous brief journey to the foot of the mainmast.

Now he worked with frantic rapidity. Two lengths of the maintopsail halyards; he had to keep his head clear to prevent his fumbling fingers from entangling them. Then a desperate journey, in two stages, first to the wheel, and then to the deckhouse. He tore open the door and stumbled in over the coaming, the lines in his hands. There were two feet of water in the deckhouse, surging about with the motion of the ship. Barbara was there; he saw her in the light from the door. She had wedged herself as well as she might in her bunk.

Another wave burst over the Pretty Jane at that moment; water came pouring in through the gaping seams of the deckhouse and he could feel the whole thing lift again on its bolts, and he knew a moment of wild despair at the thought that he might already be too late, that the deckhouse was going to be swept away with them in it. But it held—the surge of the water as Pretty Jane lay over the other way flung him against the other bulkhead.

"I must get you out of here, dear," said Hornblower, trying to keep his voice steady. "You'll be safer tied to the mainmast."

Barbara had managed to dress herself in his absence; at any rate she had some sort of dress or petticoat on. Hornblower made fast the lines about her while the ship rolled and swayed under their feet.

"Listen carefully," he said. And he told her, what he wanted her to do, how she had to watch her chance, rush to the wheel, and from there to the mainmast.

"I understand, dear," said Barbara. "Kiss me once more, my very dearest."

He kissed her hurriedly, his lips against her dripping cheek. It was only the most perfunctory kiss. To Hornblower's subconscious mind, Barbara, in making her request, was risking their lives for it—staking ten thousand future kisses against one immediate one. It was womanlike for her to do so, but odds of ten thousand to one had no appeal for Hornblower.

Still she lingered. "Dearest, I've always loved you," she said; she was speaking hurriedly and yet with no proper regard for the value of time. "I've loved nobody but you in all my life. I had another husband once. I couldn't say this before because it would have been disloyal. But now—I've never loved anyone but you. Never. Only you, darling."

"Yes, dear," said Hornblower. He heard the words but at that urgent moment he could not give them their rightful consideration. "Wait for my signal!" he bellowed into Barbara's ear, and then he made the hurried dash to the binnacle. One group of men had bound themselves to the wheel.

There was a frantic moment as he looked about him. He waved, and then Barbara crossed the heaving deck as he took up on the line. He had

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just time to fling a bight round her and pull it tight and seize hold himself as the next crest burst over the ship.

Over—over—over. Sluggishly the Pretty Jane wallowed up again. Hornblower had an idea that one man at least was missing from the group at the wheel, but there was no time to think about that, for there was the passage to the mainmast still to be accomplished.

At last that was done. There were four men there already, but Hornblower was able to make Barbara as secure as possible, and then himself.

It was shortly after this that a monstrous wave swept away the deckhouse and half the ship's rail.

It may have been the loss of the deckhouse that called Hornblower's attention to the behaviour of the Pretty Jane. She was lying in the trough of the sea, not riding with her bows to the waves, rolling wildly and deeply. She could not be expected to survive this for long.

The foremast should be cut away. Then the pressure on the mainmast would bring her bows on to the sea, increasing her chances.

AFT there was Knyvett, bound to the wheel, no more than a few feet away; it was his decision as captain. Hornblower waved to him. He pointed forward to the weather foremast shrouds; but Knyvett merely watched stupidly.

Hornblower felt a moment of fury; the next roll and submergence made up his mind for him. The discipline of the sea might be disregarded in the face of this indifference and incompetence.

An axe would perhaps be best to cut those shrouds, but there was no axe. The man beside him had a knife in a sheath at his belt. Hornblower tested the edge, found it sharp, and then unbuckled belt and all and rebuckled it about his own waist—the man gazing at him in bewilderment.

In the howling wind and the driving spray and the solid water that surged round him, Hornblower cut himself two lengths of line and made each of them fast round his chest with an end hanging free. Then he looked over to the foremast shrouds, planning again. There would be no time to think things out when the moment for action came.

A length of the rail still survived its battering there. He eyed and measured the distance. He eased the knots that held him to the mast. He spared a glance at Barbara, forcing himself to smile.

He awaited his moment. First he almost misjudged it, and had to draw back, swallowing hard in the tense excitement, before the next wave engulfed him. As the next wave surged away, he watched the Pretty Jane's motion again, cast off his bonds and made the rush up the steep deck. He reached the rail with five seconds to spare—five seconds in which to secure himself, to knot himself to the shrouds as the crest burst over him, in a torrent of water which first swept his legs from under him, and next tore his grip loose so that for a second or two only the lines held him before he could re-establish his grip.

The Pretty Jane wallowed clear again. It was awkward to fasten the lanyard of the sheath knife to his wrist. Now Hornblower was sawing desperately at the shroud; the soaked fibres seemed like iron, but he felt them part little by little.

He wondered if, when the rope parted, it would fly dangerously, and he decided that as long as the other shrouds held, the reaction would not be too violent.

So it proved; the shroud simply vanished under his knife—the wind caught its fifty-foot length and whirled it away out of his world, presumably blowing it out as a streamer from the mast-head. He set about the next, sawing away in the intervals of being submerged under the crashing waves. He cut and he hung on; he struggled for air in the driving spray, he choked and suffocated under the green water, but one shroud after another parted under his knife. The knife was losing its edge, and now Hornblower was faced with an additional problem; he had severed nearly every shroud—the aftermost ones—within reach and soon he would have to shift his position to reach the foremost ones.

But he did not have to solve that problem after all. At the next roll and the next wave, actually while he was struggling under water, Hornblower was conscious of a series of shocks transmitted through the fabric of the ship to his clutching hands—four minor ones and then a violent one. As the wave fell away from him his swimming eyes could see what had happened. The four remaining shrouds had parted under the strain—one, two, three, four—and then the mast had snapped off; looking back over his shoulder he could see the stump standing eight feet above the deck.

The difference it made to the Pretty Jane was instantly apparent. The very next roll ended half-heartedly in a mere violent pitch, as the shrieking wind, acting upon her mainmast, pushed her stern round and brought her bows on to the waves.

Water-logged though she was, the Pretty Jane still had a chance—and Hornblower on the starboard bow was comparatively sheltered and able to contemplate his handiwork with some sort of pride.

He looked across at the pitiful groups of people, clustering bound to the mainmast and the wheel and binnacle; Barbara was out of his sight in the group at the mainmast, hidden from him by the men there, and he was consumed with a sudden anxiety lest further mishap might have befallen her. He began to cast himself loose to return to her, and it was then that a sudden recollection struck him.

Barbara had kissed him, in the lee of the vanished deckhouse. And she had said—Hornblower remembered well what she had said; it had lain stored in his memory until this moment. She had not merely said that she loved him; she had said she had never loved anyone else. Hornblower, huddled on the deck of a water-logged ship with a hurricane shrieking round him, was suddenly aware that he would never again feel that dull ache of jealousy of Barbara's first husband.

That was enough to bring him back to the world of practical affairs. The remaining length of his life might well be measured in hours. He would more likely than not be dead by nightfall, or by tomorrow at latest. And so would Barbara. *So would Barbara.* The absurd tiny feeling of well-being that had sprung up within him was instantly destroyed and replaced by a frantic sorrow and a despair that was almost overwhelming. He had to exert all his willpower to make himself master of his drooping body again, and of his weary mind.

He cast himself loose and dashed for the mainmast. The tremendous wind might well have carried him clean aft and overboard, but the upheaving of the stern checked his progress sufficiently for him to swing into the lee of the group at the mainmast and to clutch one of the lines there and hang on. Barbara, her wet hair streaming out, had a smile and a hand for him, and he forced his way into the group beside her and bound himself next to her.

He took her hand in his again, and was reassured by the return of the pressure she gave it.

THEN there was nothing to do except to remain alive.

Part of the process of remaining alive was not to think about being thirsty as the day wore on and the yellow daylight was replaced by black night. It was hard not to do so, once he had realized how thirsty he was. And now he had a new torment when he thought that Barbara was suffering in that way too. But there was nothing he could do about that at all, nothing, except to stand in his bonds and endure along with her.

To be concluded next week

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In go the flying bargains!

Continued from page 7

in buying a second-hand aeroplane as with a second-hand car," says Shackleton. Before a civil plane is allowed to take off from anywhere in the country, it must hold a Certificate of Airworthiness, awarded by Air Registration Board officials after periodic tests, usually once a year.

"Their examination is so intensive," says Shackleton, "that a plane is practically dismantled and then rebuilt before they are finished. An aircraft may be twenty years old, but to get a certificate it must be as safe as on the day it was made."

Shackleton makes a point of investigating the cause of accidents involving aircraft supplied by the firm. A garage owner living outside London flew to France in a two-seater aeroplane bought from Shackleton to collect some tractor fittings. He loaded the equipment in the passenger cockpit and set off for home. But the compass needle fixed resolutely on the mass of metal within the plane. He flew out into the North Sea instead of crossing the Channel and crashed when his petrol supply ran out. He was picked up by a lifeboat but died before reaching land.

In reply to his query about a South American crash immediately after delivery of a costly airliner, Shackleton received a telegram saying: PLANE PERFECT. PILOT TOO FOND OF WHISKY.

A film producer once sought Shackleton's help in making a first World War flying picture. The producer was sold two old biplanes without engines and loaned a third biplane which could still fly. One of the engineless planes was used for scenes of the hero climbing into his cockpit. The other was set on fire to illustrate the hero's crash. The serviceable plane appeared for the scenes of aerial battle in between.

Keith Shackleton's father, William Shackleton, was an aircraft designer when, with Lee Murray, an Australian pilot, he founded the firm in 1931. William Shackleton is still managing director, and his son combines selling aircraft with being an artist, author, ornithologist and yachtsman.

A woman motorist might have thought Keith Shackleton was combining air and road travel when she was driving near Market Harborough a few years ago. Looking into her rear mirror, she saw that she was being followed by Shackleton's plane, about to touch down behind her. Flying to the Auster aircraft works in Leicestershire, he had to make a forced landing through bad weather. He chose a disused airfield's perimeter track, now used as a public road.

"The lady driver wobbled quite a bit," says Frank Dismore, the company's general manager and Shackleton's co-pilot on the flight, "but there was plenty of room and we were never anywhere near the car."

Shackleton's most uncomfortable business flight was in 1946, soon after joining his father's company without any previous experience of buying and selling aircraft. He arranged to meet at Andover Aerodrome an Irish pilot wanting a better plane on a part-exchange agreement. Shackleton was there first and, watching the Irishman make a good landing in what appeared to be a reasonable machine, never thought to make a closer examination. The Irishman was pleased with the plane which Shackleton had brought along, and handed over £600 to complete the deal. Then he climbed into his new plane and flew away to the west.

"I had a shock when I took off in the Irishman's plane," says Shackleton. "The interior was a shambles. The altimeter was jammed to suggest that I had never left the ground, the plane flew level only when the control stick was pushed over to the left until it touched the cabin floor, and the compass was useless.

"My plan had been to loop the loop to celebrate my first transaction as an aircraft broker. Instead, keeping low, I had to head for the nearest railway line and humbly follow it home, via Woking Station." THE END

SHIRIANA • 2

by COUNT ENRICO BENTIVOGLIO-MIDDLETON

Captured—by a horde of frenzied pygmies

Suddenly they bore down on us, a screaming stampede of savages. We stood there helpless . . . and waited to die

I WAS standing in a stream, ideally shallow for diamond prospecting, when suddenly our four Guiaca tribe Indians, who were watching from the shore, jumped to their feet in alarm. They pointed into the jungle, from which they heard a sound.

"Is it game?" I whispered to our guide, a young Indian we called Luigi.

"No," he answered. "Samatari."

The other Indians grabbed their bows and arrows, their hearts pumping with fear. The Samatari, they had already assured us, were the most savage and deadly of all the Shiriana tribes in Venezuela. They crept up on strangers, clubbed them to death and ate the remains.

I waded quickly to where our Indians cowered, and was joined there by my companion, Alphonso Vinci, a fellow-Italian.

We could hear footsteps. The Indians sniffed the air. I was terrified; so was Vinci. He had prepared for such a moment and called out, as the steps came closer: *"Toitabeh, Samatari"*—Good Samatari.

The steps halted. The Samatari were undoubtedly out hunting. They had heard our noise, suspected a tapir, and begun to creep up. But now there came this strange voice. They were puzzled.

A branch rustled and a face appeared from the jungle. A few more faces came, and more.

For fully a minute the Samatari stood gazing at us. In this short time, despite my terror, I realized that they were even farther down the scale of evolution than the Guaica. Most of them looked like true pygmies, no more than three-and-a-half feet tall.

Then they began screaming like wild animals and ran at us.

We fought, but only half-heartedly. We fully expected to die. What we did not notice, but recalled only later, was that the Samatari carried their bows at their sides, with their arrows pointing downwards. Soon they were all over us, tearing off our clothes, ripping them to shreds, stripping us naked.

They tugged at our bodies, at our beards and skin with great force. It was then that I understood they had no desire—at least no immediate desire—to kill us. They wanted to touch our white skin, my blond hair, our beards—anything unfamiliar to them.

They snatched the bows, arrows and red

A Marquiritari Indian shows Middleton his catch. The tribe celebrated his visit with orgies of banquets and all-night dancing

Endlessly the torture went on as our captors swarmed over us. . . . Then they left us, helpless to fight the jungle

guayucos, or loincloths, from our Guaica and wound the fabric round themselves. They grunted at the Guaica, and the Guaica, we saw with astonishment, understood their speech.

When the Samatari left us alone for a moment, Luigi said: "They want us to walk ahead of them." The Samatari pushed at the Guaica, who were as scared as whipped puppies.

One of the Samatari snatched our gun from Vinci. Fortunately, Vinci had the safety catch on, or we might well have suffered revenge for the consequences when the Samatari pressed the trigger with his toes while peering down the muzzle.

As we walked, our captors kept coming up to us to hold our arms and rub their faces against us, groaning with tremendous pleasure.

After about half an hour we reached their camp. At least eighty Samatari were in the clearing, up in the trees, shaking down fruit, or on the ground collecting it.

The Samatari with us began screaming. The Guaica screamed. Samatari in the clearing screamed, too, and rushed towards us.

It looked like a charge of troops. They knocked us down and we were buried under them as they satisfied their primitive curiosity.

They touched us all over, tugged at our hair, pulled our beards, rammed their fingers into our mouths, explored our palates and the surface of our teeth with their fingers. They scratched our arms and legs, grasped the hair on our bodies, and rubbed their cheeks against our breasts and bellies.

Several sat on our faces. Others fought over who was to paw us next. We could not move. The tears ran down my cheeks as they tried to remove my beard, looking for the seed that made the facial plant grow.

The torture went on for what seemed hours. Then slowly the Samatari's curiosity lifted. One by one they moved away, and Vinci and I rose, tottering.

We managed to find our hammocks which they had taken from us. Our limbs were almost paralysed with pain, but we managed to rig up the hammocks. We threw ourselves into them and vomited.

After that I remember nothing. I fell asleep—or fainted. . . .

VINCI and I were paying the price of our own curiosity. Diamonds, it is true, lured us into the jungle that summer of 1953. Having dug £25,000 worth a few years previously, and spent most of the money, we were anxious to get some more. But also we wanted to do what no white men had ever done before. We wanted to meet the Shiriana, to discover the truth about these mysterious jungle people who are some of the most primitive on earth, and whose bravery and brutality are legends throughout South America.

Our original hope was to discover diamonds in a remote savannah which had caught our eye during a plane trip.

We reached it, after weeks of hard travel through rapids and snake-infested jungle, but found no diamonds. Disappointedly, a German and two Italians who shared our expedition, left us.

Vinci and I loved the jungle. Now that we were alone, we decided to take the opportunity of doing some exploring. Our decision to go back down the Merevari river was not only to reach a saw-toothed mountain which looked, in our experience, a promising spot for diamonds, but also to visit the Samatari country.

Those Shiriana tribes we had met so far showed us cowardice, laziness or, as in Luigi, friendliness and intelligence. Would the Samatari live up to the Shiriana reputation of fierceness?

Some months before we were captured by the Samatari we began our journey into the stronghold of the Shiriana. The first stage was to paddle down-river to the village of the Marquiritari tribe. It was headed by an immensely powerful Indian, superbly muscled, whom we nicknamed Pancho.

The Marquiritari are active people, clever with their hands. We lived with them for nearly two fascinating weeks, learning about their ways. We watched as they transformed enormous hardwood trees into slender canoes and logs into exquisite paddles.

Each night they organized banquets and we filled ourselves with smoked meats and fish and *cacire*, an infernal alcoholic brew. And after the food, the dancing!

The Marquiritari women were coquettes who painted their naked shiny bodies with intricate designs, adorned themselves with feathers, and then strolled by us with an elaborate display of the body. Not to be outdone, the men pulled out all their eyebrows, drew little black dots in place of the hair and painted red stripes and circles on their husky chests.

They clapped their hands in rhythm. For hours it went on—the beat, the relentless intoxicating beat. The dancers followed it meticulously. Their feet thundered down with perfect timing and they never stopped wriggling their bodies for an instant.

The day before we were to leave Vinci and I wandered a short way from camp. Along a little river, we noticed a movement among some bushes.

A Marquiritari woman, her belly tremendously distended, was preparing to deliver a child. She had left the *malocca*, or communal house, without a word to anyone, except her husband, we learned later. She had to be alone with whatever god watches over the pregnant aborigine.

She bent down and kneeled at the edge of the water. Next she began shaking herself, slowly but firmly. Her arms lifted inch by inch, and the child emerged.

Without losing her composure, the woman grasped the new-born, severed the umbilical cord between her teeth and then lifted the baby by its feet and carefully rinsed it in the water.

Still kneeling, she rocked the infant softly in the cradle of her arms for a few moments. Then, using a tree as a support, she rose and began to walk towards the *malocca*.

We ran back to the *malocca* to be there when she arrived. We found her husband lying in his hammock, moaning and groaning with pain, as if it were he who had been in labour.

But when the woman and her child arrived, his sufferings ceased. He gave her his hammock and attended the child with a love that was wonderfully strange and tender.

A few hours later the woman seemed to be sleeping and the father joined his friends. That night they drank *cacire* and sang and danced with abandon. . .

It took us five days' journey down-river to reach a Guaica village. There was a real purpose for this visit. Although we had Luigi and another

Vinci befriends a party of Shiriana. To impress the Samatari he

young Guaica we called Sempronio with us, we needed at least two more men to help us on the trip. Luigi, we felt sure, would assist in arranging this; the village was his home.

THE Guaica were markedly more primitive than any other Indians we had seen. They were squat, dishevelled and filthy, with infected sores all over their bodies and enormous balls of tobacco distending their mouths. Children, evil-smelling old men and ancient women with wrinkled breasts hanging down to their navels crawled, croaked and squealed everywhere. Smoke from a hundred fires swirled and filled the air with pungent odours.

The Guaica made us welcome by rubbing their faces against ours, pulling our beards and gasping at the feel of our clothes.

A fight broke out as darkness fell. The inhabitants of each of the two *malocca* in the clearing wanted us to stay with them. Luigi intervened, and after a long speech convinced everyone that we should stay with him, since he was our regular guide. At once we felt as if we were being buried under Luigi's family as our hammocks were placed among theirs.

The *malocca* was crammed with squirming and scabrous human life and dogs. Banana skins littered the floor. The Guaica jabbered happily while Vinci and I coughed away the night.

The morning came and we walked down to the river. The Guaica followed us in a tumultuous parade. Acting by instinct to wash off the lingering feel of the dirty brown bodies, I ran madly towards the water and, all my clothes still on, leaped in. Vinci did the same.

The reaction was instantaneous. The little brown people surged forward too, shouting with joy and splashing into the river.

The noise was terrific. Birds in the vicinity rose in terror and fled.

I swam out to a nearby island with Vinci, and together we stretched out luxuriously on the beach in the sun.

"What a life!" exclaimed Vinci, happily.

"Who needs diamonds?" I shot back.

It was the season when the jungle was rich with fruits and nuts of all kinds. Later that day Vinci and I went ashore and found game—pigs, turkeys and other birds—so thick in the jungle that we soon had an immense bag.

We ferried it out to the island, which the Guaica had reached in their canoes. They settled down to steady prattling and seemed willing to stay there as long as we stayed.

We built fires and soon had an orgy of eating. For sport, Vinci and I threw fruit around. In a moment, the tribesmen imitated us and excitedly began throwing it too.

Vinci ran towards the water and smacked it with a long, flat racing dive. The Guaica chased him, shouting wildly. I followed and splashed water at them. Instantly, foam was flying in all directions.

Then the Guaica started dancing and making love, whenever the instinct struck them.

The festivities went on for days that seemed endless. It was as if the world contained only warm sun, starlit nights and cornucopias of food.

The day came for us to leave. Bit by bit, we let Luigi know that we were going south and probably towards the Samatari country. We were deliberately cautious in making our revelation for we had grown fond of Luigi and wanted to make sure that he would join us. We felt that Sempronio, whom we also liked, would come if Luigi did. They feared the Samatari, but trusted us more.

Vinci and I stocked our canoe, and without a word climbed into it and sat there. For several minutes nothing happened.

"I know they will come," Vinci muttered.

"Of course, they will," I said.

Luigi and Sempronio came all right, carrying their bows and arrows. They sat in the canoe silently but not glumly. Then three more Guaica came. One of them was particularly important to us; a massive man whom we nicknamed Brutus. He was said to have been in the Samatari country as a youth.

The seven of us sat in the canoe. We had begun to move when suddenly one of the Indians rose, stepped out and rejoined the tribe. In that way we

posed as a witch doctor—and did a wonder cure with penicillin

eliminated the doubter, who could have been troublesome.

We were off. . . .

One of the Guaica sat in the prow. We came to call him Senatore. He was a contemplative man of about forty.

He did no paddling. His main function seemed to be "spiritual"—making incessant movements with his hands, at the water, at the sky, towards land. He was holding up the rain and calming the waves. Whenever the elements began to stir ominously, he increased the tempo of his gestures.

Seated behind him was Sempronio, who did all the paddling, under the careful guidance of Luigi.

Immediately behind me, in the stern, was Brutus. His eyes ceaselessly combed the jungle in search of fruits, particularly ones that looked like beans but had sweet white meat inside. Whenever he saw them, Brutus roared and Sempronio paddled in the indicated direction. Then all the Guaica jumped into the water, cut down the tree with machetes and ate for hours.

Brutus had no job except fruit-watching, and this was to my personal disadvantage. With time on his hands, he concentrated on me. He kept touching my hair and leaning forward to stare at my skin. He tried to rub off the "white pigment" with a forefinger that felt like a sliver of rough sandpaper and grunted hideously.

From time to time he reached his toes around in front of my face to lift a cigarette from my mouth and transfer it to his fingers. After a puff or two, he returned it to my mouth via his fingers and toes.

Brutus was also insatiably curious about our beards. Once I snapped from a doze to find him peering over my shoulder, a machete in his hand and a speculative look in his eyes, as if he were calculating the size of cut needed to transfer the beard to his own chin. After that I was careful not to dose with Brutus around.

The jungle blotted out the sky, the ground, the sun and the moon. We could not have kept any direction without our Indian friends.

Occasionally we stopped and looked for diamonds, but without luck.

We were distracted by frequent hunger, for the country we were entering was almost utterly devoid of game. Fruit and nut trees were few and far between. Whenever we came across a colony of monkeys we shot as many as we could and feasted until our stomachs were bloated. Then, like animals, we slept it off.

Vinci and I had the pressing fear that the Indians would desert us.

Time after time Brutus found evidence of Samatari trails in the jungle—the skulls of devoured animals, broken trees, remnants of small fires, a scorched nest of termites burned to keep the occupant of an adjacent hammock warm at night.

Before long our tense Indians began to inspect every clearing cautiously before entering. They whispered one word repeatedly: "Samatari."

After many long treks and fruitless prospecting in numerous streams we arrived at the Aragusa river, where we found a small, promising tributary and camped for the night.

It was early the following morning, as we worked in the stream, that the Samatari pounced on us, captured us and bore us in triumph to their jungle village. . . .

WHEN I awoke after collapsing in my hammock, the Samatari were busy collecting fruit and did not even trouble to glance in our direction.

Some of them were pygmies; others were slightly taller. Quite a number were much lighter in colour than the Guaica. These had ape-like, Mongolic features, and had removed all the hair from the tops of their heads.

Our four Guaica had vanished. At first I thought they had taken advantage of the Samatari's preoccupation with us and disappeared into the jungle. But no! They suddenly appeared, hardly recognizable from the Samatari and mixing with them without the slightest fear.

Senatore, we were told, had put in a word for Vinci and me, telling the Samatari that we were pleasant people who had many possessions on the Merevari and were powerful leaders.

After a time the Samatari looked upon the Guaica as fortunate for travelling with such great white men.

Plainly, the Samatari were more primitive than the Guaica, though. They did not live in *malocca*, but camped wherever they found food to be plentiful—a nomadic existence. They practically lived in trees and ate anything—bugs, larvae and worms.

The Guaica, Vinci and I reasoned, had changed because of their contact with the far more intelligent Marquiritari, who in turn owed their progress to the white man, perhaps as recently as half a century ago.

We knew our lives were safe as soon as we had passed a few days with our captors. The incredibly fierce, club-wielding, cruel Samatari of the stories we had heard emerged as playful, even gay people who had to fight occasionally, but only for survival.

But we worried about our gun. If it went off and shot a bullet into an aboriginal eye or stomach we could expect to follow the victim swiftly into whatever grave the Samatari used for their dead. Luckily, one of our Guaica friends managed to retrieve the weapon. From then on we never let it out of our sight.

We wandered through the jungles with the Samatari, looking perhaps far more ridiculous than they did—or at least, feeling so. I carried the shotgun and Vinci wore a watch. Otherwise we were as naked as newborn babies.

"We can forget about diamonds," said Vinci resignedly.

We found Luigi at the base of a large tree, collecting fruits which were being shaken down by Senatore and Sempronio.

"What's going to happen to us?" we asked them.

"We'll have to stay with the Samatari," Luigi answered.

We were prisoners. If we should attempt to leave without permission, Luigi said, they would slaughter us.

As we talked the fruit began to heap up round Luigi's feet. We dared not ask for any; this would have been interpreted as weakness on our part. We had to collect, too.

"Up we go," Vinci said, and in a moment of inspired strength my Alpinist colleague was swinging from a branch and climbing up the tree.

For a while I remained on the ground as the collector, but up in the tree the one who did the shaking down could eat his fill even as he worked. So I soon joined Vinci among the branches.

We had to adapt ourselves as best as we could to the Samatari life. For how long? We could not guess.

In the days that followed we ate larvae with them, but never could bring ourselves to eating their greatest delicacy, caterpillars.

The thin fare of the jungle around us was all we had, and collecting it required incessant work, for which we grew weaker and weaker. By failing to keep up with the Samatari as food collectors, we grew hungrier day by day, and the last vestiges of fat melted from our ribs and thighs. Our muscles ached terribly.

Vinci's watch told the time, but of what use was time? We were ruled by the sun. It gave us hours of light in which to seek food, and imposed on us the limitations of darkness, when the growling and emptiness in our stomachs robbed us of sleep.

The watch, nevertheless, proved to be a powerful asset. This came about because of the Samatari method of curing the sick and healing the wounded.

SAMATARI have no deity, no religion, and no concept of a life after their own. They live in a world of invisible influences in their lives about which they could scarcely care less until they become ill and in pain.

Sickness and injury are amorphous, nasty creatures of some kind which invade a man's body and there is nothing to do but call for a *piace*, a "doctor" whose only qualification for healing is a deep, powerful voice.

The patient lies in his hammock and the *piace* sits next to him, shouting imprecations and making heart-rending moans and roars that fade into whistling sounds. This is to make the invisible affliction flee the body.

Anybody with a suitable voice can act as a *piace*. Those with the best voices for frightening sickness are called *lahallatuan*—sort of super-*piaces*. A *lahallatuan* is a privileged person. Others will work to help keep him fed.

Vinci made wonderful use of the situation. The Samatari had tossed aside our little remaining stock of medicines, and we retrieved some of it. Then Vinci spotted a young man with a festering cut on his hand, suffered in a fight against another tribe.

Vinci sat beside the wounded man and placed a little penicillin ointment on his watch. As an ad-libbing *piace*, Vinci was inimitable. I could only

A Guaica blows a horn given to him by Middleton. A fight broke out among rival Guaica for the honour of accommodating the explorers overnight

roar with laughter as he began to address the evil in the Samatari's wound.

He voiced a perfect contortion of strange sounds, marking the circle made by the watch's second hand and raising a finger to point at the sun and draw circles in the air. Next he moaned for a long time and tore two hairs from his chest, which he mixed with the ointment. Finally he let out a bedlam of fiendish noises. By this time the patient was frightened.

Vinci applied the penicillin. The patient attempted to rub it off, but Vinci slapped on a bandage and dismissed the young man with an imperious wave of his hand.

The cut healed so rapidly—these Indians have inordinate healing power—that thereafter *"Piace"* Vinci was busy from dawn to sunset making cabalistic signs and groaning.

As a *lahallatuan* he did not have to climb trees for his food. I speedily enlisted myself as his male nurse and from that day on we were fed.

The Samatari did their best with their games and their customs to intrigue us. They showed us how they fought, using their heads as shields on which to receive blows, while swinging sticks against their adversaries. Their heads were criss-crossed with scars, and their legs pitted with arrow wounds.

Several times a day the pygmy-like Samatari would climb to my shoulders and scream with pleasure mixed with fear at riding so high in the air.

This better understanding allowed us the freedom to go to a stream. We took a bath while the Samatari, who abhor water, watched with disgust from the banks.

Vinci and I managed to locate a few of our scattered possessions, and by ripping up some of our mosquito nets we made loincloths which gave us at least elementary covering.

But we were becoming increasingly worried. We had been with the Samatari for two weeks and were no nearer to escaping from them.

We were becoming, instead, accepted more and more as belonging to them, and were almost beginning to feel that way ourselves.

COMPETITION for our favour began to emerge. Senatore, for one, came each day and sat gravely before us and talked to us for an hour or more. We could not understand a word of what he said, but he hoped this boldness would impress the Samatari.

From time to time a Samatari came to give us a present—perhaps a delicious worm six inches long. We never dared refuse these delicacies, but slyly slipped them to Sempronio, who ate anything and probably felt we were favouring him with a special privilege.

The Samatari revealed nothing about what they had in store for us, if anything. But one day Luigi disclosed that another Samatari tribe was believed to be not far away. It was an enemy tribe and, he said, we were being considered as vanguards for a prospective attack, thanks to the killing power of our gun.

To this day Vinci and I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Luigi for this information. It not only helped us to avoid getting killed in a war not of our making, but it offered us an opportunity to escape.

We began by dropping hints about our "wealth" back at the canoe. We told the Samatari that we had many, many knives like the ones they had taken from us, and enough red cloth and beads and matches to equip the entire tribe. Above all, we had guns.

The Samatari reacted with wide-open eyes and groaned excitedly at each retelling of our inventory. They gathered around us as again and again we shaped with our hands imaginary mountains of gifts and guns.

Many began whispering, and we heard them exclaim: *"Auaii,"* meaning yes.

Yes, we should be permitted to return to pick up these gifts. Yes, we should come back with the guns.

"Auaii!"

It could be done quickly? Naturally, we agreed. It could be done in two *"puli-puli"*—two moons, we would reach the supplies, and in two more moons would be back.

Then the war could start and what shambles we would all make of those miserable, evil Samatari of the other tribes!

The thought of an easy conquest seemed to produce a form of ecstasy. One night the singing lasted until dawn and we pressed our plan—the guns, the knives, the other gifts, only two *puli-puli* away.

On the sixteenth day after our capture Luigi said that the six of us could leave to retrieve our possessions. We patted the Samatari "chief" and assured him of our return. With our Guaica, Vinci and I walked away from the spot where the Samatari were collecting food.

None of them so much as glanced at us. And why should they? We were coming back, weren't we?

EYES—3

God has made man to take pleasure in the use of his eyes, and the foolish creature is continually trying to live without looking at anything.

John Ruskin

For a couple of hours four of them accompanied us, but they then changed their minds and abruptly turned home, trusting the white men to return with those wonderful gifts.

Vinci and I grinned at each other, but as the Samatari disappeared from sight I felt a slight pang of guilt at having practised such a deception. . . .

We were hungry. We had travelled at least fifty miles while with the Samatari. Now we had to live off the jungle, for we carried no provisions.

We walked in silence until night came. There was nothing to eat; the Samatari had gone through the territory like a cloud of locusts. Vinci and I were terribly weak the second day. We set out at dawn and walked until dark, again without anything to eat.

The hunger was frightful. We chewed bark and the shells of nuts—anything. Our stomachs hurt us.

Around noon on the fourth day we heard the Guaica squealing a short distance ahead. They had found a fruit tree, and all of them scrambled into the branches. They were eating as fast as they could. I could see the juice pouring down their cheeks, and I could almost taste the fruit.

I put my hand on the tree, but that was as far as I could get. Vinci and I were both too weak to climb.

"Throw some down," I called to Luigi, but in an off-handed manner, as if I really did not care. There was no reply.

The slavering, mixed with groans of pleasure, went on. Vinci and I sat and waited. We did not dare show weakness now—above all, not now, when the Guaica could murder us merely by deserting.

After a long time they came down from the tree and we set out on the trail again.

That the Indians had not given us fruit was not a sign of animosity. It was now everyone for himself. They could not share, for that would be suicide.

The next day came. Our legs were heavier, our pace more stumbling. But pushing through the dense undergrowth I caught a glimpse of something moving.

I slashed with my machete. It was a large snake. I had cut it in half.

We then cut the snake into smaller pieces, wrapped it in leaves, and cooked it. We ate everything, including the head, and started off again.

We walked an average of fourteen hours a day. The human body is capable of great strength when life itself is at stake.

The sixth day we climbed a hill, a particularly tough task, and just beyond it we found a region of fallen trees, apparently the result of a tornado-like wind. This time it was the Guaica who fell behind. They were looking for wasp honey in the fallen branches.

Vinci and I pressed ahead. Several hours later we shot a wild turkey. We camped and ate it as soon as it was cooked. The Indians did not catch up with us until nightfall. They saw the bones but asked no questions.

Refreshed, Vinci and I set out ahead of the others the next morning, and late in the afternoon we reached the river where we had left our canoe.

At least a hundred bananas were still in the canoe. Vinci and I were so hungry that we lost our heads, probably for the first time since entering the jungle nearly a year before. We at once mashed about sixty bananas into two gallons of water, producing a paste.

We ate it all. Then we lay down and were sick for an entire day.

When the Guaica arrived, they did the same thing with the remaining bananas. But they did not get sick. I don't know whether we had simply left only the good bananas for them, or whether their stomachs, accustomed to worms, larvae and caterpillars, were extra tough.

Afloat again in our canoe, Vinci and I found that our nerves were stretched almost to breaking-point. We had a squabble—our first serious one—with the Guaica over whether we should try to make their *malocca* on a non-stop trip, or camp along the route. We did not trust their ability as rivermen. We settled the issue by seizing paddles, asserting our authority, and forcing the canoe to the bank.

For an hour or more the Guaica remained apart from us, sitting on rocks next to the canoe. We should not have hesitated to shoot them if they tried to leave, for the canoe was our only way out. But then they rejoined us, hung up their hammocks near ours and were friendly again.

We reached the Guaica *malocca* with no further incident. Everyone there seemed surprised that we had returned alive. Were Luigi and the others heroes now? Hardly. That is not the way of the Indian in the Venezuelan jungle.

A Marquiritari, Shiriana or Guaica goes about his business as if everything—even the most spectacular event—is as routine as sunrise.

SEMPRONIO and some other Guaica accompanied us to the Marquiritari *malocca*, where we gave all surplus possessions to Pancho and his band.

In return, they gave us a beautiful canoe, and it was agreed that a group, led by Pancho himself, would accompany us back to the Paragua river. They, too, were anxious to see the civilization from whence we had emerged.

Under the Marquiritari, the return trip took only thirty days—with so much meat and fish that we often threw food away.

The jungle's face changes suddenly with the rainy season, which was then full upon us. The water had risen several feet; newly fallen trees blocked our path at every turn. Also, the trees were full of beautiful orchids in dazzling reds, pinks and white.

Vinci and I gathered as many of the plants as we could. We had gone seeking diamonds, and returned bearing orchids for sale.

Our arrival in the out-post mining town of La Paragua caused a sensation. The landing stage was crowded with people, all asking where our diamonds were, and where we had made our discoveries. Their disappointment made me feel sad.

After five days spent in marvelling at the wonders of La Paragua, the Indians set off down the river. They had not adjusted very well to the Venezuelans, nor the Venezuelans to them. They had been threatened constantly by the Civil Guard (frontier police) and were anxious to eat game food again back at their *malocca*.

Vinci and I sold everything—orchids, outboard motor and gun. Then we borrowed money so that we could return to Italy. We left the diamond fields with nothing.

Will we return?

Who can tell.

Without doubt, there are countless millions glittering beneath the Venezuelan outback.

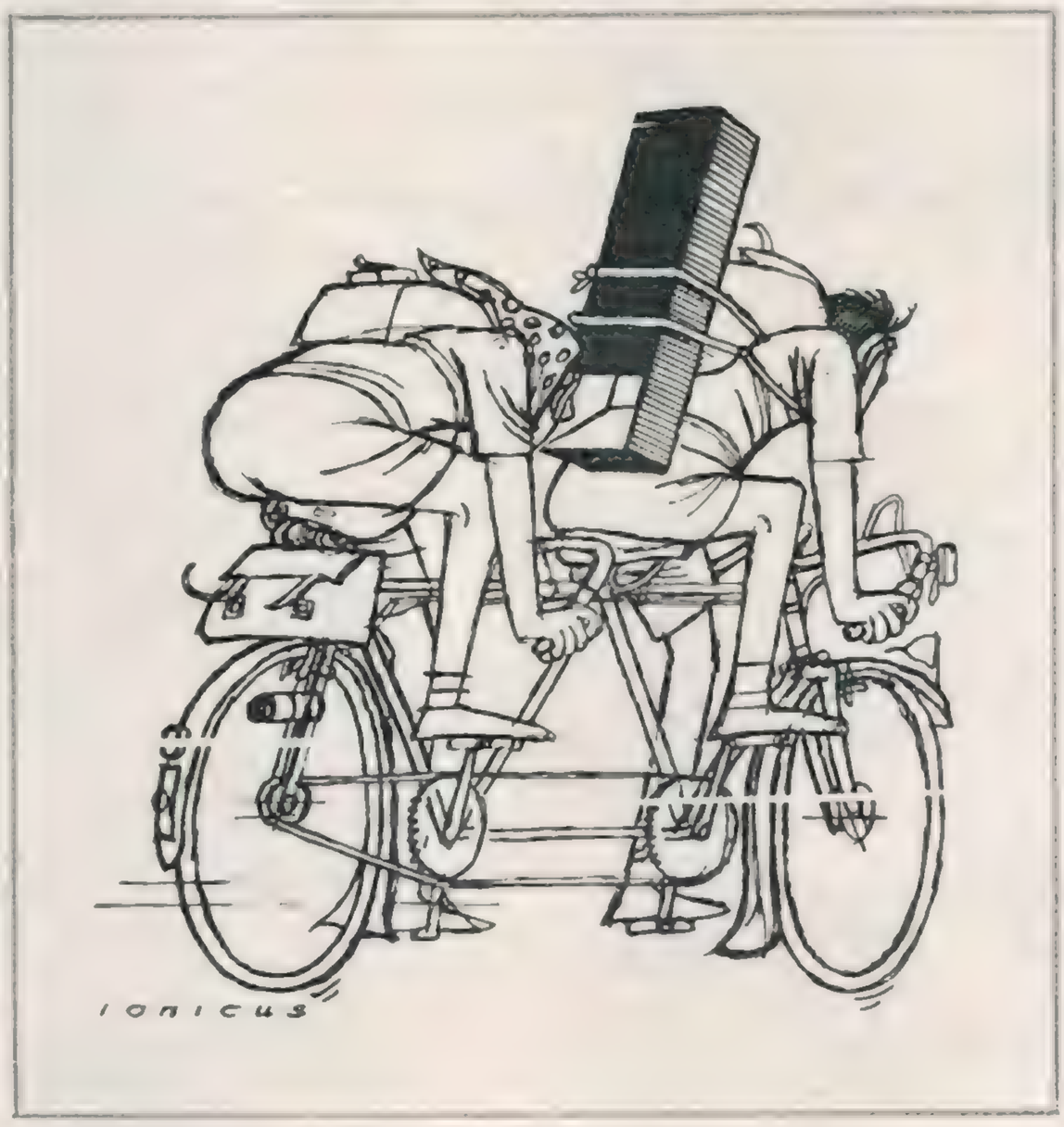
Anyone can go there, at any time. Anyone can spin the wheel of fortune in the jungle, provided he is prepared to accept the jungle as his master and on its own terms.

This I believe I have learned.

THE END

© Count Enrico Bentivoglio-Middleton, 1958

"Shiriana," by Count Enrico Bentivoglio-Middleton, will be published as a book early next year by W. H. Allen



Your children run my life

Continued from page 6

Woolwich Schools' Athletic Association and was responsible for two sports days each year, one for the junior schools and one for the secondary. For weeks beforehand, the committee was preparing rules, getting in entries and drawing up the heats.

On the day itself, I was responsible for seeing that the ground was marked out, that the ice-cream stalls and St. John Ambulance men were in their places and that judges, stewards, whips, starters and marksmen were standing by with their notebooks, pencils, stopwatches and starting-pistols.

I want to emphasize that I am in no way unusual in doing these things. Every teacher worth his salt finds himself involved in boxing tournaments, swimming galas, parent-teacher associations, choral associations, juvenile employment bureaux and road safety committees. All these activities take a large slice of our spare time.

We do not, of course, receive any overtime payment, however long we work. All teachers in state schools draw a basic salary of £475 a year which increases by £25 a year to a maximum of £900. (In 1955, women had the first of seven equal supplementary rises which will bring them up to the same level as men by 1961.)

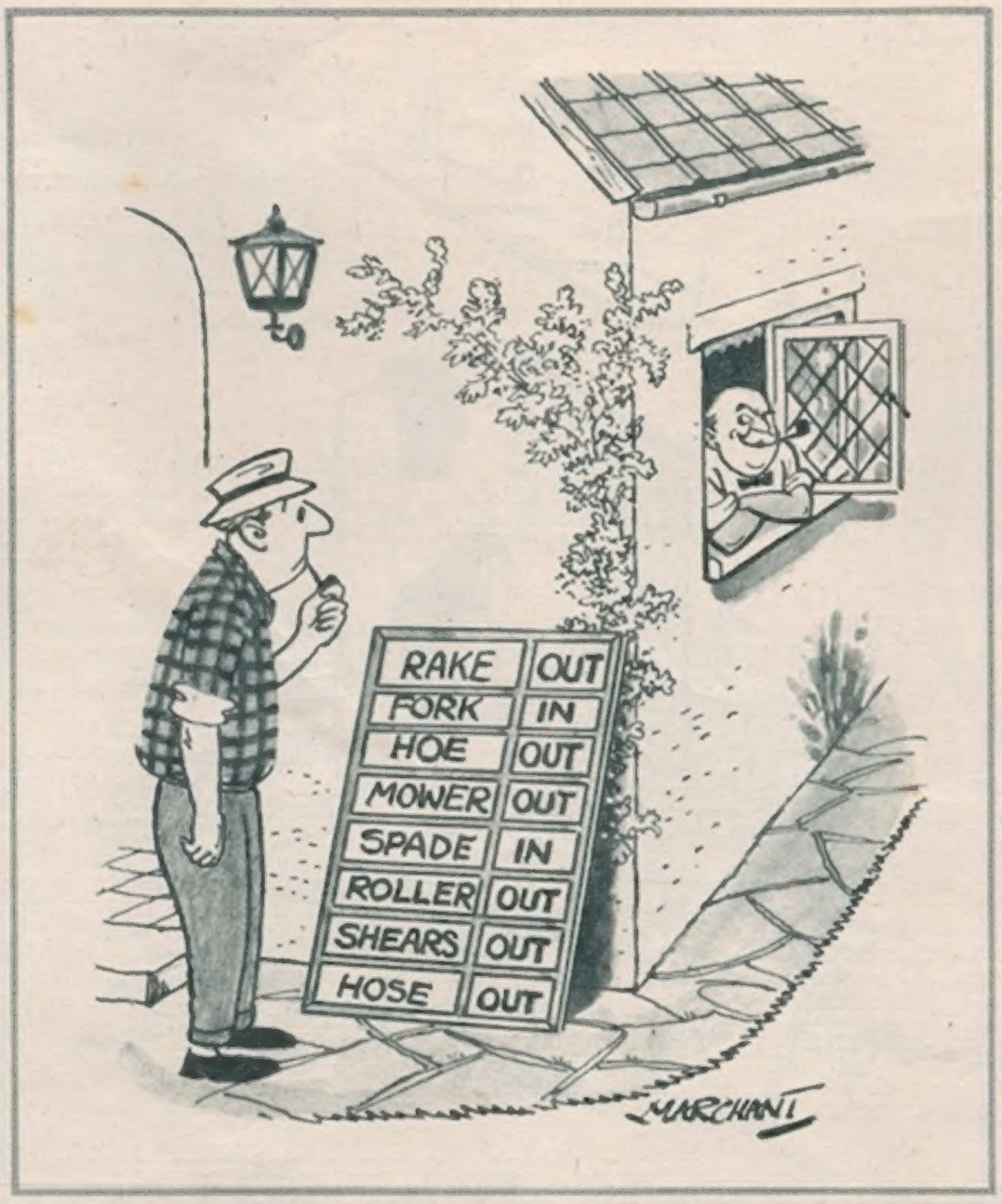
In London we get an additional allowance of £36, which increases to £48 at the age of thirty-seven or after seventeen years' service. On top of these there are various supplementary payments. A man with a pass degree gets an extra £75 a year, a woman £60. A first or second-class honours degree rates another £50.

Again, every school has a number of graded posts. These are worth between £75 and £175 a year, and go to teachers with special responsibilities.

In schools which tackle advanced work—and in a few others—heads of departments are appointed. These draw supplements of between £125 and £350 a year. In schools with more than 201 children, deputy heads are appointed, on a scale which starts at £95 and goes up to £450 in a few very big schools.

Heads receive anything from £125 to £1,115 on top of their basic salary.

Now what are the average teacher's chances of qualifying for these extra payments? Again, I take myself as a typical example. I have no degree. At my school, there are two graded posts. One is for the music teacher, and the other for the deputy head, who is usually chosen from the women teachers.



One of my few chances, therefore, lies in a headship. And for this, competition is intense. There are 7,500 secondary teachers in London and only 315 headships; 7,500 primary teachers and 940 headships. Secondary heads are chosen by open competition, but for vacancies in primary schools only those on the promotion list may apply.

Although the promotion list consists of about 150 names chosen by a rigorous system of recommendation and interview—last year only one in seventeen applicants was successful—more than sixty of them applied for a headship which recently fell vacant. I myself went on the promotion list in 1955.

Despite the various supplementary payments, the average salary for London teachers last year was £750 in primary schools and £890 in secondary schools. The average for heads was £1,140 and £1,550.

Being until recently a bachelor living with my sister in my father's house, I have managed to live fairly comfortably on my salary and to run a small car. But teachers with families often find themselves compelled to augment their salaries by teaching at night-school, working in travel agencies and marking examination papers.

We have, of course, a superannuation scheme. Each year we contribute six per cent of our salaries, and our employers contribute the same. After forty years we are entitled to a pension of 40/80ths of the average of our salaries for the last three years. For every year's service over the forty we get an extra eightieth up to a maximum of forty-five.

We also draw a lump sum payment of 3/80ths of our average salary since 1956 plus 1/30th of our average annual salary before 1956. Though better than they were, our conditions compare unfavourably with those in business and the other professions. Nobody today would come into teaching for the money or even, in times of full employment, for the security. Yet we need more and more teachers—to cope with the sharply increased postwar birthrate, to teach the extra classes due to the raising of the school leaving age and ultimately to reduce classes from the present unsatisfactory average of forty (in the primary schools).

Although it was anticipated that the total number of teachers would rise by seven thousand each year, there are still grave shortages in some of the less attractive industrial areas and in some subjects, notably science.

There are many advantages in a teaching career. Even today, the security and pension are not to be ignored. The holidays, though frequently broken into by out-of-school activities, are admittedly long. Most of all, the work itself is full of interest. Nothing else is quite so thrilling as seeing a group of backward children gradually mastering something that has long baffled them.

Some time ago I organized a school party for the London-Glasgow schoolboy soccer international at Wembley. Rather less than two coach-loads applied and I asked a friend in a neighbouring school if he could fill the rest of the places in the second coach. Within days, half the schools in the neighbourhood were sending names. Very quickly, I had six coach-loads.

Before we started, I went into each coach and said: "Don't get out until I give the word, and when we start to move don't take your eyes off the rolled newspaper I shall have in my hand."

With the aid of that single rolled newspaper I led 240 wildly excited schoolboys from the coach park at Wembley, through the milling crowds at the entrance, to our places inside the stadium. After the match, I led them back again—without losing a single one.

I think the Duke of Edinburgh summed it up when he recently said: "Teachers today are more than just purveyors of knowledge. They are almost proxy parents." THE END

Blazing nightmare in the lions' den

Continued from page 15

of the fire that his flat would be destroyed. He had taken the Belle Vue post after losing £37,000 in an unsuccessful attempt to run his own zoo outside Glasgow. As he hunched away from the heat in front of the cages, he pondered miserably on his carelessness in not insuring the furniture in his new home. Actually, the direction of the fire had changed slightly, and the flat escaped with cracked windows.

When Commander Hoare went into the lion house to warn the two men that they might have only seconds to destroy the animals, the ballroom was completely enveloped in flames. On an inspection of the surrounding area, one of Hoare's lieutenants, Divisional Officer Harry Lomas, met Fred Bonelli, the resident band-leader, who was trying to organize the rescue of a pair of gold cufflinks left in the bandroom.

Lomas assured him that he was too late. Wooden supports were falling away beneath asphalt roofing. Lomas said: "This old place might have been built to burn, and we'll just have to let it burn."

The firemen were being moved into fresh positions to prevent the outbreak spreading. Units operating the hoses at each end of the gap between the ballroom and lion house were gradually being forced back by the heat. At longer range, their hoses could not cover the whole frontage of the lion house. Most of the pumps were being assembled behind the lion house so that the hoses could be used over the roof.

Conditions inside the lion house were now at their worst. The heat was so intense that the two men had to turn up their coat collars to protect the backs of their necks. Scorched windows exploded when spattered with cold water from the hoses and bombarded Wilson and Morris with glass splinters. A gas main and electric fuse-boxes blew up inside the ballroom.

As the fast-crumbling block tottered from the blast, onlookers expected to see the eastern wing collapse on the lion house. Mrs. Wilson hid her head in her hands. But when she looked again the ballroom, its back broken, still stood.

"We can't stay in here any longer," Wilson was telling Morris. "And we've got to shoot these cats before we go. If we wait until the place actually catches fire the animals will either burn or get out among the firemen."

"We had better start with Judith," said Morris.

The lioness had retreated into its sleeping box to get away from the heat. It was twisting uncomfortably in the box as the men rested their rifles on the crush rail and pushed the muzzles through the bars. The lioness looked at them curiously. Each man drew an imaginary cross between its eyes and nostrils and aimed at the spot where the lines crossed.

Morris, a musketry instructor during his police career, was worrying about the chance of a stray bullet hitting the firemen behind the wooden rear wall.

"Right," said Wilson. They fired together. The lioness fell but moved. They fired again. This time one of the bullets smashed a bar of the sleeping box and ricocheted round the cage. Judith was still.

The two men moved along to the leopardesses. They found the heat slightly less intense. Then Hoare was with them. "Don't kill any more," he said. "There is a definite chance we can save this place after all."

A BARRAGE of fourteen hoses lined up behind the lion house sent its jets over the roof to provide a curtain of water between the lion house and the ballroom. The temperature inside the lion house began to drop; Wilson and Morris relaxed by leaning on the rifles.

Outside, Hoare and his men kept a tense watch on the one threat to their command of the situation. The eastern wing of the ballroom, certain to fall, might bridge the seven-yard gap and spread the blaze to the blackened, blistered, paint-bubbling lion house.

At about 3.30 a.m. the wing finally began to topple. Two firemen operating a hose near to its base turned to run. One stumbled. The other pulled him clear as the side of the building crashed to the ground in a dense cloud of steam. When the smoke and steam cleared the firemen saw that the wreckage reached to within a foot of the lion house. The twelve inches to spare were enough.

From then on the fire was well under control. When Wilson and Morris left the lion house at four o'clock the ballroom was burning itself out to the bangs of exploding barrels of beer and crates of whisky in the bar storerooms.

The cause of the fire is a mystery, although experts believe that it started near the bandroom in the roof. Completely destroyed in the ballroom block were two restaurants, two bars, a cafe, a staff canteen, and four shops. Nearby trees were shrivelled, the water chute tower was charred, and every window in the lion house was shattered. But the rest of Belle Vue was safe. The Fire Brigade report stated: "Casualties—one lioness."

New restaurants and bars were built at Belle Vue in time for the Easter holiday crowds three months later. Work has begun on a new ballroom.

The lion house, repainted and reglazed, now looks the same as before the fire, except for an obvious patch of welding where the bullet smashed a bar in Judith's old cage.

"I'm not a sentimentalist," says Wilson, "but I like to think that was my bullet. There was a tear in my eye after the first shot." THE END

I let the wind blow me round the world

Continued from page 11

worn out one skirt in Israel, and had made myself another before setting off from Beirut.

As I rode I often sang or had conversations with myself or the bicycle—a second-hand, three-quarter size women's model that had cost me £2 10s. in a church jumble sale.

It might sound silly now, but it's extraordinary how natural it seems to talk to a bicycle you've been riding for several thousand miles. I discussed quite a lot with that bike.

In Basra, a hot, tiring town, I ran into more red tape. The authorities refused to let me cycle through Persia.

It was too hot to argue and when the British consul handed me a note to the captain of a ship leaving for India I accepted it.

To my astonishment, I was greeted like a film star in Bombay. Reports of my trip had appeared in the newspapers and wherever I went people stopped me in the street and invited me to stay with them.

A newspaper reporter took me to a film studio to meet India's Clark Gable—Ashok Kumar. As we were chatting—the film star had instantly taken my hand, gazed into my eyes and invited me to have dinner with him—a man in a green eye shade rushed up.

"No time for sitting around," he said to me. "Report to Make-up and Costumes at once."

Ashok Kumar nodded. "Do as he says. You can earn yourself a hundred rupees or so."

A hundred rupees was £7 10s. I went to Make-up and Costumes.

I never did discover what I had to do in that film. Bafflingly dressed in an outsize gown, furs and high-heeled shoes, I found myself in a group of beautiful, half-naked girls who were writhing in a voluptuous dance (the scene appeared to be in a night club).

"Sit there," a man told me, showing me to a table. "Don't do anything. Don't speak. Just sit."

So that's what I did for my £7 10s.

I STAYED six weeks in Bombay and then set out for Delhi—a thousand miles away. After cycling past the red and purple mountains known as the Western Ghats I came to the Indian jungle. For endless miles the dusty road stretched ahead; bordered by lush green vegetation and strange exotic flowers.

Near the village of Igatpuri a station wagon pulled up beside me and a tall, slim Indian jumped out. He saluted and introduced himself as the commissioner for the Igatpuri district.

"It is my duty to alert you, memsahib," he told me. "There is a tiger in the district. A man-eater.

"I think it would be advisable to put the bicycle in the wagon and for you to drive with me. The tiger hunt is tomorrow."

This was more than agreeable. I had been cycling from Bombay for almost two weeks and was exhausted by the heat. And the prospect of a tiger hunt was exhilarating.

The commissioner invited me to dinner, but during the meal a boy rushed in and spoke rapidly to him.

He stood up. "I'm sorry, I've got to leave you. The tiger has just killed a woman at the well. We'll have to start the hunt immediately."

From my room in the rest-house bungalow that night I watched the party of beaters leave the village, their flickering torches disappearing into the jungle. The beat of the drums grew fainter. Half an hour later there was a single shot and the beating stopped.

At about 3 a.m. I woke up to hear a scratching at the door and the padding of paws on the veranda. For one panicky moment I thought that it was the tiger, but then recalled the shot. I went back to sleep.

In the morning, the tiger was found dead on the veranda. It had been wounded during the night but had escaped—to my door.

Everywhere I went in India I received amazing hospitality. In the villages I was treated like a princess. And at the fort-surmounted city of Gwalior I was invited to a banquet by the maharajah.

Although it was now twenty-one months since I had left England and I had already come one third of the way round the world, people still insisted on telling me that the journey was impossible for a girl on her own.

I waved aside their warnings that I would have my throat cut or be shot by bandits. I was in far less danger than in the traffic at home, I told them.

Perhaps I grew too confident.

Half-way between Bombay and Delhi, on a lonely stretch of jungle road, two young Indians jumped out of a lorry and dragged me off my bicycle into the jungle.

I screamed and fought for what seemed hours, but what was probably only a few minutes. Then the providential appearance of the twice-weekly bus scared the men and they fled in their lorry.

They were soon picked up. A police control post, a few miles along the road, had taken details of all vehicles. I gave evidence at the trial and each man was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

Now I was nervous about going on. I wondered if I would ever feel safe on a lonely road again. One night I decided to find out. I pumped up my tyres and cycled off to see the Taj Mahal by moonlight. It was glorious—and, as usual, I was too interested in the journey to be afraid.

From Delhi I went to Madras, a journey that took six weeks. I had been in India nearly six months and was afraid that I would be held up by the monsoons, so I pushed on quickly south, making for Ceylon. My plan was to take a boat to Singapore and then to cycle through Malaya, Siam and Indo-China. But waiting for me in Colombo was a distressing letter.

My father was dangerously ill and my mother begged me to return to nurse him. The money for my fare had been wired to a local bank.

Three days later I was aboard the Wairimu, bound for New Zealand.

My father lived only a few weeks after my return and I was deeply thankful that I had arrived in Colombo in time to go to him.

For the next ten months I worked and saved hard to raise enough money to continue my trip. I needed £193—£93 for my fare to Canada and £100 that the Canadian authorities specify visitors must have with them.

Relatives did their best to dissuade me, but nothing could stop me now. Having gone so far I was determined to be the first girl to cycle alone round the world. And to strengthen my resolve I made myself a tough new cycling skirt out of denim.

In November, 1954—just a year, a month and a day after my return—I was on my way again, on board a ship bound for Canada.

Winter was beginning when I arrived in Vancouver, which gave me an excellent reason for not setting out immediately but finding a job. I wanted to build up a store of dollars.

I was lucky enough to find one quickly, as a nurse in a private surgical hospital. But as soon as the snow melted I was on my bicycle again.

I reached the foothills of the Rockies at the same time as British Columbia's worst floods in fifty years. For several days I managed to keep ahead of them, but at last I was overtaken by a storm, ten miles from the nearest town.

With the rain came a howling gale that almost tore me out of the saddle. The road was soon flooded and everything I possessed was sodden. It took days to dry my things.

The Rockies climbed up and up, and I pushed and pushed. At one point, rounding a sharp bend, I found myself face to face with a family of grizzlies. I halted, petrified. But after a few moments the grizzlies shuffled off into the pine forest.

On and on I pedalled, sick of the sight of the peaks. And then, one evening, I was suddenly on the summit.

That moment is one of the most unforgettable of my life. After days of ploughing through the mountains I looked down on the great plains below—wide, flat prairie, fat and rich, as far as the eye could see. And miles, miles away below me, a wonderful coasting run down, the town of Calgary.

I stayed a week in Calgary, but could not dally longer. I had left Vancouver at the beginning of June and wanted to get to New York, still thousands of miles away, before winter. Once on the prairie, cycling conditions were magnificent and I often covered ninety miles in a day comfortably.

But my money was going fast—even though I had picked up a few dollars from interviews on television.

But though I couldn't linger, I wasn't forever awheel. Indeed, by the time I reached the eastern seaboard I had collected three proposals of marriage—from a mountie I met at a party, a Texas oil man on holiday in Calgary and a prairie farmer.

When I bowled into New York, that wonderful city, I was flat broke. But I remembered that I was a lady and fixed up my skirt before cycling down Broadway. This denim skirt had been causing me trouble for the last few hundred miles. Despite the toughness of the material I had worn right through the seat.

The skirt, however, was the least of my problems. Two others, much more formidable, loomed over me.

The first was the matter of my next meal. The other was my fare home. I had already booked my passage on the Queen Mary in the hope that something would turn up.

Something did. Although as an alien I was forbidden to earn anything in the United States, there was nothing to stop me competing in a television quiz show. I made rapid inquiries—and was soon chosen as a competitor.

By the time the show was on the air I was so haunted by the absolute necessity of winning that I was almost a nervous wreck. The quiz master winked at me. "Don't worry, honey. You'll be all right."

I was; the first three questions were to do with cycling.

At two hundred dollars I was shaking like a leaf. The sum would just cover my fare to England. But if I failed, I would lose the lot. I decided to go on.

"In which country will you find a native race known as Maoris?"

Which country? Which country but my own—New Zealand! I could have kissed the quiz master.

SO I returned to Britain and headed my bicycle towards London. It was January, 1956, just four and a half years after I had left. The wind was still behind me. It had taken me right round the world.

My old bicycle had cracked a bracket in Canada. It could easily have been repaired, but a cycle manufacturer had pressed a new model on me.

It was on this second machine that I completed the journey. All the same, friends found it hard to believe that I had travelled 30,000 miles without a puncture, without a single replacement to either bike, without even a minor accident. But it was so. I am not mechanically minded and wouldn't have known what to do if anything had gone wrong. When either bike squeaked, I oiled it—that was all the service they got from me in four and a half years.

The day after I arrived a reporter tried to arrange an interview with me for his paper. Busy searching for a flat, I asked him to leave it until the evening. And that night I went to meet him in a West End café.

He had brought a friend along. "Hope you don't mind," he said. "He's my room-mate; a New Zealander."

We sat for several hours in the dimly lit café, sipping coffee, while I told my tale.

The newspaper had no space for my full story. But I solved the accommodation problem. I married the friend.

THE END

"I've forgotten. . . . What *am* I looking for?"

EYES—4

What do I gain from a man into whose eyes I cannot look when he is speaking?

Goethe

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The New v. The Old	At The Wash-tub
We Can't Be Choosy, So	With A Saucy Look
The Uno Fire-brigade	Mighty Difficult
On A Lonely Island	Cowboys, Crooks, Cuties
Thirsting For Blood	A Low-down Trick
If Nobody Gives Way	Came Out Of His Shell
Song Of Araby	Rampaging Around
Her Prince	In The Prison Workshop

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If Mum Had A.....	Too Free With The.....
All The Best.....	A Gigantic.....
In A Funny.....	How The .... Started

EXAMPLE .....

BULLET

EX. .....

B.

EX. .....

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EX. .....

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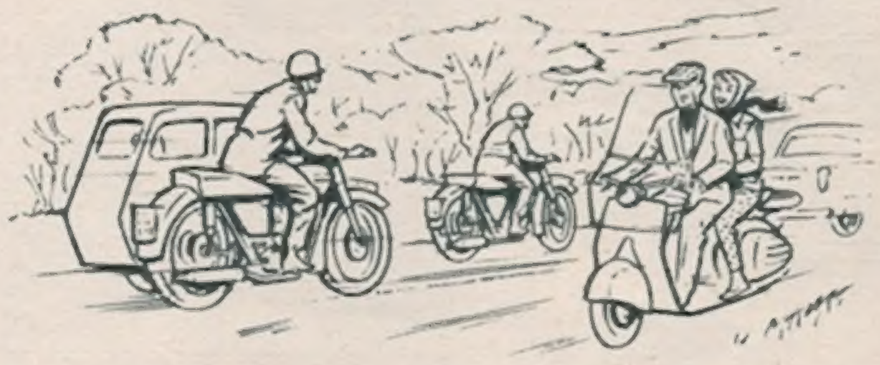

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